UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

INTERFERENCE IN CHILDREN'S ART

BY

YETUNDE A. MICHAEL

A thesis submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Education.

DEPARTMENT OF ELEMENTARY EDUCATION

EDMONTON, ALBERTA

(FALL 1993)

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ISBN 0-315-88071-6

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The undersigned certify that they have read, and recommend to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research for acceptance, a thesis entitled INTERFERENCE IN CHILDREN'S ART submitted by YETUNDE A. MICHAEL in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of MASTER OF EDUCATION.

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DEDICATION

To the one who never fails - the Lord Jesus.

And to all those who have been sources of strenght to me.

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to give an account of teachers' interpretations of their interactions with children within the art class setting. The study involved the experiences of three teachers of art in the junior elementary classrooms (grades one to three) and provided a description of acts of interference and intervention within classroom interactions.

Related literature consulted described several ways in which art should be taught to enhance children's artistic abilities. However, the need for this study sprang from the limited coverage of interference and intervention in the art literature.

Through the use of an ethnographic research method, the researcher was able to gain insight into the classroom culture in its natural setting as it relates to the teaching of art. Participant observation technique as well as interviews and fieldnotes were used to collect data for the study. The interpretations of teachers' descriptive accounts of the perceived consequences of their interactions were made from analyzing the data collected.

This study reveals that teaching and interacting with children involves the totality of the teacher, that is, teacher's interest, background, training, and experiences. Decisions are made at every step during classroom interaction, and some of these decisions may not necessarily lead to a perceived positive outcome for the children, but to disturbing and uncertain ends.

In conclusion, this study emphasizes that interaction within the classroom setting cannot be viewed in isolation. Classroom actions are often contingent upon the teacher's and children's

"lived-in-world" experiences. Previously acquired knowledge and the kind of interactions experienced while adhering to the tacit rules of the school are some of the factors responsible for the teachers actions and interactions in the classroom/school setting.

The study recommended that only teachers who are interested in teaching art should be assigned to teach the subject and those without art training should augment their training with several in-service training. Other recommendations for further studies included looking into children's perspectives of the interactions in the classroom. In addition, prolonged study could determine the influence that teachers' interactions and interference have on children's perceptions and feelings toward art and the extent to which this influence is carried to the adult life.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I will like to express my sincere thanks to my supervisor, Dr. Pat Rafferty who has not only been my advisor but a friend. She has been a major source of strenght to me in times of uncertainties and has given me courage in times of discouragement.

Many thanks also go to the other members of my committee, Dr. Larry Beauchamp and Dr. Robert Ware.

I will also like to thank the three teachers who volunteered for this study.

Special thanks also go to Jan Sundmark and Lorraine Nelson for their assistance.

Most of all, I wish to thank my family whose great warmth has melted away my many fears - my son Kesi, my daughter Farrah and my husband Steve have been a great support to me.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

> Sam was a grade 5 student when he was selected to compete with three others for the best art work to be chosen for the newly constructed school hall. Sam was identified at an early age as an artistically talented child whose painting, drawing, and sculpture works showed some promise. The contestants were given two weeks to present their works. Sam's parents were enthusiastic about the prospect of their child winning the award and the scholarship attached to the best art work to be chosen. In an effort to help their child in winning this prize, Sam's parents hired an art teacher from another school to basically guide their son. Sam completed the project but did not win the prize. Many years later, Sam who subsequently refused to have anything to do with art, attributed his failure to win the competition to the suggestions made by the art teacher. Thinking retrospectively, Sam stated that "he [the art teacher] did not buy my original idea in the first place and I did not want to let my parents down so I played along."

There was another story of a child who was repeatedly, but unsuccessfully, corrected by her teacher to paint the sky blue instead of orange. Frustrated by this child's stubbornness and insistence that the sky was orange to her, the teacher took the case to the child's home. On visiting the child's home, the teacher found to her surprise that the sky was indeed orange there. Looking around, she realized that the heavy industrial concentration there had strongly polluted the air around the suburb to the effect that the sky was discolored.

These two stories illustrate the problem of understanding the world of children by teachers. In the first story, the child yielded to

the pressure (although a well-intentioned pressure) of his teacher and in the second story, the child was obstinate until her "view point" was discovered and understood.

Personally, I can recall several pleasant memories of my art teachers whose interactions with me led to greater love for art and greater desire to express myself artistically. However, classroom teaching and learning take place through teacher-student interactions and since human interactions are often saddled with communication problems, it is to be expected that while some children's learning will be facilitated, other's may be inhibited.

Ideally, professionals in every discipline have standard procedures to ensure good practice and to minimize unintended consequences in general. In the medical profession, for example, doctors are known to conduct a diagnosis before prescription is made. This is followed by careful examinations, not only to ascertain the effectiveness of the medication, but also, to determine whether or not there are unintended negative consequences. The task of ascertaining unintended negative consequences is particularly cumbersome in some fields or disciplines, especially when the process and outcome rely on human interaction to disclose what the case is. Teaching, as noted by Haigh and Katterns (1984) is an intentional act in which teachers draw upon a repertoire of skills that enable them to make knowledgeable diagnoses of their classroom environments, and, at the same time, make informed, sensitive, and flexible conditions for teaching and learning.

Perhaps due to this complexity, teachers rarely talk about negative unintended influences they have or might have had on their children. Yet, if it can be assumed that teachers' interactions with their children result in learning (that is, positive developments in the children), it can also be speculated that some interactions may lead to negative consequences in some children. A teacher may expect certain outcomes from a particular interaction with a child, but other unexpected (positive or negative) outcomes may occur as a result of that same interaction. In this study, negative unexpected outcomes are referred to as unintended consequences.

For the purpose of this study, deliberate actions taken by teachers to bring about positive redirection in children's learning as they educate, integrate, model, and present information within the art program are referred to as intervention. On the other hand, some negative unintended consequences could be labeled interference. These negative unintended consequences will be studied as they are identified and described by the teachers. The researcher will discuss whatever she observes as interference-related actions based on the teachers' interpretations of the situation with the teachers. The study is concerned with the examination of teachers' perceptions of interference as they attempt to intervene in children's art.

Tracking interference within intervention in teaching and learning is a difficult exercise for several reasons. First, it is not an easy task for the researcher to identify all the classroom interactions and at the same time differentiate which ones are intended or unintended. Furthermore, since interference is often

tacit and unintended by nature, it could be difficult to detect. House and Mathison (1983) note that this type of intervention is seldom documented. Where documentation occurs, it is often unsystematic and anecdotal at best. It is often invisible and underestimated since the curriculum structure and the school system as they exist today do not seem to provide any incentive for the investigation of unintended consequences of a teacher's action on children. The structure of curriculum and the system of testing and grading in schools are often prescribed, leaving room for little or no deviation. School operations are conducted almost rigidly and since only success stories are identified and rewarded by the system, unintended negative consequences are rarely discussed.

In spite of these reasons, doing the right thing is as important as not doing the wrong thing in the teaching profession. The issue of teacher influence is important in art education since, as Lowenfeld (1987) claims, many children readily identify with art production and often take it for granted that their skills are without need of guidance or direction. Erdt (1954) explained that "children do not think of art as requiring years of study and training in particular and difficult skills, but feel confident that they can do the things they want to do in their own way, and so is born a child's honest attitude toward his [her] art" (p. 3). Erdt further noted that art represents a visual language to children, a source of inspiration, productivity and enjoyment to them. He stated that "children have a great keenness to do things, and art activities bring wholesome experience–social relationships, companionship, fun and investigation" (p. 4).

It can be assumed that teachers of art often set out with the intention of guiding children's art skill development rather than imposing their own preferences on the children. An effective art class, therefore, offers children the first opportunity to realize their creative ability, unique differences, and appreciation of the beauty in other's works. Consequently, teachers of art play a vital role in fostering a sense of self-worth, self-confidence, and tolerance in their children. These are achieved essentially by the way art teachers interact with children.

But, teachers of art are also faced with the problem of determining where to draw the line between interaction and interruption, and between intervention and interference. This problem which has received very little attention in art literature and of which we know very little is a very important one. This study is about how teachers make sense of their daily activities with particular reference to how they distinguish interference from intervention and how they guide against possible unintended consequences within their interactions with their children during art lessons. Hopefully, our understanding of how teacher/student interaction becomes intervention or interference will be useful to art teachers who desire to minimize unintended consequences and to curriculum designers and art educators who wish to gain further insights into student-teacher interactions during art lessons.

Purpose of the Study

I have worked extensively with children of several ages and on various art projects in different cultures. Over the years, I have met and talked with several teachers who tell stories of unintended outcomes as a result of their efforts to guide children's art skill development. These teachers could also recall memorable experiences with children whom they have positively influenced. I have often wondered how common these feelings are with teachers.

The feelings expressed by these teachers are similar to those encountered in a cross-cultural setting where a teacher is new to the culture of the children she is teaching. Since interaction is an aspect of human behavior, culture as the knowledge that people use plays an important part in determining the quality and appropriateness of interactions. Culture, therefore, constitutes an intervening condition in teaching and learning situations and the success of an art lesson is contingent on these conditions.

While teaching art, I have personally observed spontaneity in some children's art while others have exhibited considerable amount of struggle. I have often wondered if a child's struggle or resignation (sometimes) could be attributed to the kind and quality of interaction with the adults with whom he/she has associated. In a social setting, the quality of interaction is often determined by the interplay of intervening conditions present in the setting. Culture, as the knowledge of tradition, religious beliefs, mores, power configuration among parents, school authority, physical configuration of the setting, teachers and students constitute some of these intervening conditions. Others include teacher's knowledge

of the children and discipline/subject, in this case, art. I have also noted that within the elementary school system, teachers are usually taken to be generalists in which case they have to teach all subjects and not necessarily their areas of specialization. For the purpose of this study, therefore, teachers who teach art are all referred to as teachers of art while the students in the study are referred to as children.

As one who has interacted widely with teachers of art in several countries, I have also wondered about the concerns they have with respect to their interaction with and influence on their children. As one who is familiar with the literature in art, I have questioned myself on many occasions about the presence and prevalence of interference in the art classroom.

For example, Lowenfeld (1970) has written extensively on the subject of interference in children's art and he conjectures that "this interference starts perhaps when children scribble and eager parents expect to see something that fits their own adult conception. How ridiculous to overpower these little children's souls" (p. 53). Given this possibility, many children may be experiencing some hindrances in their art skill development, and others may develop a negative or apathetic attitude to art and art-related activities. Duncum (1982) states that "for art educators, then, the question should not be whether or not to teach conventional ways of images but how best to teach" (p 35). The main purpose of this study is to investigate and describe teachers' perceptions of intervening conditions as seen in a classroom setting with a view to differentiating intervention from interference. The essence of the

study lies with understanding teacher-children interaction during art lessons. Efforts will be made to investigate how teachers recognize and attempt to guide against intervening conditions thought by teachers to have unintended negative consequences. Specifically, the three purposes of the study are:

(a) To describe concerns expressed by teachers with respect to the possibility of intervening conditions with unintended negative consequences resulting from their interactions with their children;

(b) To describe teacher-student interactions which can be associated with intervention or interference as perceived by the teachers; and

(c) To contribute toward a more effective pedagogy in art education for curriculum design and teacher education by providing some insight into how teachers view their interaction with children.

Research Questions

For the purpose of data collection, the following questions will serve as guides in the study:

(a) What are the concerns of teachers of art with respect to interference or unintended consequences of their interactions with their children?

(b) What classroom conditions or situations do teachers of art consider to readily foster intervention/interference?

(c) What are the general implications of intervention and interference for the teaching and learning of art as seen by the researcher?

Limitations and Delimitations

In a study of this nature, some limitations exist. This study is an attempt to gain an understanding of a phenomenon which can best be described as complex and elusive. The type of data obtained for the study depends largely on my understanding and interpretation of the perceptions of the participating teachers. This study is delimited to investigate intervention and interference as observed by me and as understood by the participating teachers in a classroom setting.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Art educators have always occupied themselves with the task of increasing the effectiveness of their art education programs. For this purpose, they are continually involved in a search for greater understanding of children and how they learn, the school setting and its impact on children's learning, the art curriculum and the effectiveness of various teaching styles. Increased knowledge in these areas has undoubtedly enhanced art education. Gaitskell, Hurwitz, and Day (1982) express that "the foundations of art education have been built over the years on increased knowledge and changing beliefs about the nature of the visual arts, conceptions of children and adults as learners, and the values of society as conveyed through educational goals and practices" (p. 5). While art educators and curriculum planners have devoted greater efforts into providing resources and improving curriculum structure for art programs, less effort has been given to the identification of the kind and quality of interaction that goes on in the school/classroom.

In this chapter, a review of the following topics is presented: (a) the meaning of intervention and interference, (b) intervention and interference in school, (c) intervention/interference in children's art development, and (d) intervention/interference and pedagogical argument.

The Meaning of Intervention and Interference

More often than not, art educators turn their attention to art curriculum in their effort to improve conditions for the teaching and learning of art. Consequently, art literature abounds with suggestions on how to improve art curriculum in schools. However, equally important is the process adopted by teachers to create the experience contained in the curriculum. Basic to this process, is how teachers interact and influence children.

Purposeful teacher-children interactions characterize daily classroom activities, but there are those, like Lowenfeld and Brittain, who believe that children possess innate artistic capabilities which, if uninterrupted by adults, would develop and blossom naturally, individually, and uniquely. For example, Lowenfeld and Brittain (1987) claim that

> if it were possible for children to develop without any interference from the outside world, no special stimulation for their creative work would be necessary. All children would use their deeply rooted creative impulses without inhibition, confident in their own means of expression. (p. 7)

It cannot be supposed that a child will grow up without interactions with adults. Neither can it be supposed that within this interaction, some actions of these adults would not constitute intervention or interference. If Lowenfeld and Brittain's assertion that children do not need special stimulation in art is true, then teacher-student interactions in art classes would run the risk of interfering with the natural unfolding of children's artistic expression. However, it would be erroneous to assert that all influences from teachers are interference or negative, just as it would be equally erroneous to

assume that all influences from teachers are helpful and positive to the children. While the line between intervention and interference may be very thin, it appears that where "inhibition" (as stated by Lowenfeld) occurs, interference can be said to exist.

Classroom teaching and learning take place as teachers interact with children. Teachers often instigate and direct these interactions to ensure maximum use of resources and to ensure that purposeful learning has occurred. To achieve these aims, teachers sometimes take proactive steps to intervene by instituting an action or actions that may change the direction of a child's activity. To intervene, a teacher may interact to stop a negative act or habit or instigate a positive act. Interference, on the other hand, may occur when a teacher's interaction produces unintended negative consequences in children. Figure 1 illustrates the relationship between teacher-children interaction, through which intervention and/or interference may occur in a classroom setting.

Ideally, the overall teacher's goals are to create a desired behavior and to change undesired behavior in children. But, interference is an act that probably goes on in every area of life. It is sometimes regarded as part of intervention or influence. Webster (1987) defines interference as confusion, obstruction, partial or complete inhibition, or "the disturbing effect of new learning on the performance of previously learned behavior with which it is inconsistent" (p. 631). House and Mathison (1983) note that "intervention is defined in one dictionary as interference that

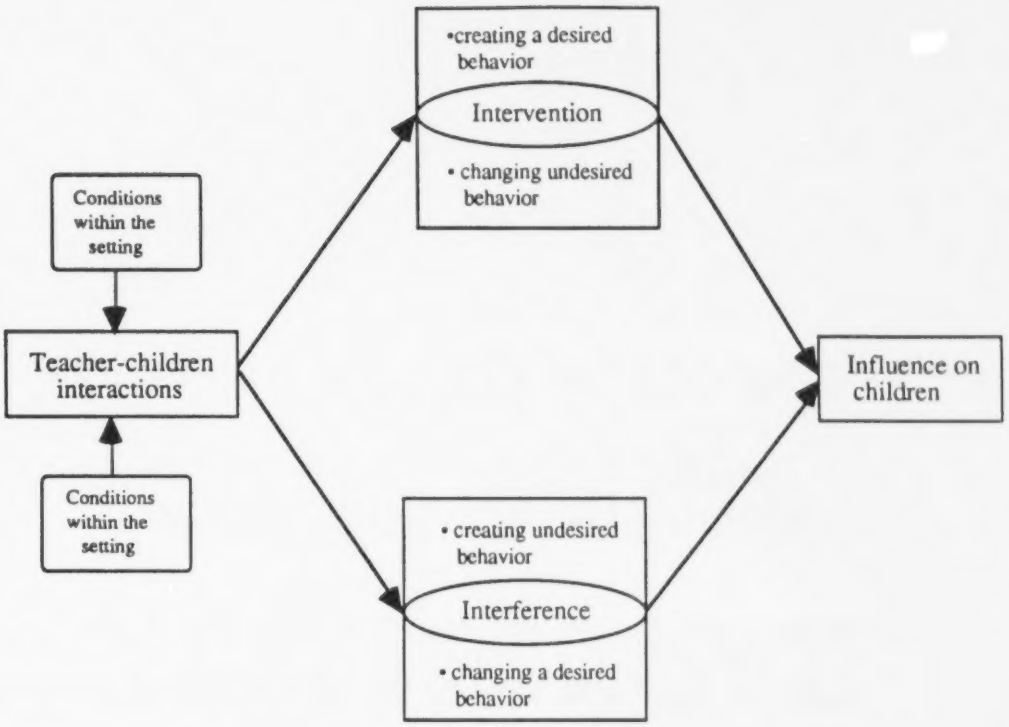

Figure 1. A Speculative Relationship Arising in Teacher-Children Interaction.

may affect the interest of others" (p. 323). The American Psychological Association (1981) states that the "notion of social influence is a powerful, broad concept that refers to the variety of ways that our thinking and behavior are altered or shaped by others" (p. 1). While some writers use the word "intervention" on a broad basis to include "interference," I have chosen to separate these two terms. For this study, therefore, the meaning of these two terms is restricted to the descriptions given in Figure 1 above.

The concern of this study is to investigate how teachers go about their daily activities interacting with children while

minimizing interference. Therefore, the central focus for the study is to study how meaning is given to action and interaction and find out how teachers come to perceive what they do as intervention and interference.

Intervention and Interference in School

In interfering or intervening, an individual or a group of individuals are involved (one way or the other) in creating conditions that influence the choices that people make (attitudes, interest, or character). Usually, intervention is a deliberate and a pre-planned action although it need not be and the change in behavior produced by intervention may be diverse. The elusive and nebulous nature of intervention in school has made it particularly difficult to investigate. Controversy exists with respect to the exact definition of intervention in a school. House and Mathison (1983) point to this problem by saying "what we call educational intervention in this chapter are large and untidy events rather than precise encapsulations" (p. 323). Nevertheless, through observation and by conducting an in-depth interview with teachers, it may be possible to shed some light on this very important topic.

American Psychological Association (1981) observes that "at every stage and in every social situation there are four forces, i.e. culture, family, peers and authority figures, which converge to create a pattern of pressures, resources and expectations" (p. 58). Intervention by authority figures tends to take various forms and also connotes a high demand of obedience which this Association calls "a basic element in the structure of social life" (p. 38).

Intervention through authority figures could include government, military, specialists in population policy, psychotherapy, neighborhood action program, health policy, or education/school board, teachers, principal, community leaders, etc. Authority figures often expect their subjects to do what they want done and, often, these subjects are not in a position to evaluate the content of requests. We often follow the decisions of authority, believing that they know more about the conditions and situation than we do. However, the American Psychological Association (1981) explains that "obedience entails acts of aggression against others. Conditions of obedience serve numerous productive functions. Indeed, the very life of society is predicated upon the existence of obedience by its citizens" (p.40). It is assumed then that for learning and interaction to take place within the school, children have to succumb to authority figures. According to Burton, (1978) children have often been viewed as objects to be taught, measured, or counseled. If children are therefore expected to obey as they are viewed this way, I wonder how teachers interact with children with regard to interference and intervention. In an attempt to change, deter, facilitate, or enhance conditions for teaching, it appears that there is a need for studies on the kind of interaction that goes on between teachers and children in the classroom.

Types of Educational Interference/Intervention

House and Mathison (1983) discuss three types of educational intervention. However, these authors admit that what they call intervention may not necessarily be so called by others. But, they

explain that educational intervention encapsulates situations where a new curriculum or educational practice is introduced without fully understanding its effects. According to these authors, educational efforts described as intervention have effects, "many of which were unanticipated, and have different effects in different settings. It is not conceptually clean, like a heart bypass operation, but is instead messy, like a social movement. Its boundaries are unclear" (p. 323). This implies that the results of educational intervention can seldom be described on a causal-effect basis, since there are often many contingent and complex conditions interplaying within and around the intervention.

With this initial explanation, House and Mathison (1983) put forth three types of educational intervention: generic intervention, policymaking intervention, and site-specific intervention.

A generic intervention is described by these authors as a large "design and production of curriculum plans and materials that are considered to be applicable to a great number of settings" (p. 326). An example of this will be the Alberta Elementary Art Curriculum Guide developed in 1985 with the purpose of providing a systematic art education guide for teachers. Generic intervention is characterized by goal setting, massive planning, and a model for implementation aimed at impacting an existing teaching and learning situation.

Policy-making intervention consists of "establishing rules and guidelines with which the schools must comply, either because the requirement is a legally binding one or because the government provides money in return for compliance" (House & Mathison, 1983,

p. 328). Any level of policy-making body such as the federal or provincial government, the legislative or judicial organ of the government, or the school board may bring about policy-making intervention. The recent Alberta School Act (1988) and the Young Offender Act (1989) are examples of policy-making intervention which are meant to influence, directly or indirectly, ways and manners schools operate. It can be envisaged that, as legal actions between parents, students, teachers, and school boards continue to rise, judicial policy-making intervention will become more prominent.

Site-specific intervention can be described as a local action which is taken within a particular school to influence teaching and learning. Site-specific interventions are often unseen and underestimated. (House and Mathison, 1983)

Although, generic, policy-making, and site-specific interventions affect classroom activities, a classroom intervention, which falls directly under a site-specific intervention, may occur as a result of a teacher-initiated action. The latter kind of classroom intervention is different from generic and policy-making intervention in that it may not be as carefully planned as the other types of intervention and its consequences are usually not carefully monitored. There may have been no prior reflection on the part of the teacher on the possible impact of this practice on children, a somewhat taken for granted pedagogy which may be a product of commonsense or convenience rather than a clearly thought out action.

The side-effects of both generic and policy-making intervention can generally be determined over a period of time. Unanticipated problems arising from the introduction of generic and policy-making intervention can be examined during project or policy review and further recommendations to improve outcomes can be put forward. However, site-specific intervention may go unnoticed hence, its unanticipated impact on children could remain largely undetermined. It should be noted that art instruction in the elementary school is part of the required Program of Studies of the province of Alberta. It stipulates that students in the elementary grades 1-6 must receive a minimum of 150 minutes instruction in Fine Arts (Art and Music) per week. The Program of Studies (1983) further states that "the art program should be scheduled for at least one hour a week, apart from its place as an adjunct to other subjects" (p. 52). But if, for example, a principal who desires to increase her school's performance in a national examination decides that teachers should spend more time on mathematics at the expense of art, the impact of this kind of school-based intervention on children's art skill development are seldom immeasurable.

Interference may occur at all levels of intervention discussed above. An ill-designed curriculum may have a negative impact on teaching and learning. A poorly formulated policy may impact negatively on schooling, a site-specific interference may occur as a result of poor implementation of a policy at a school level, and/or at a classroom level. It is this last aspect that forms the main focus of this study. As explained earlier, the essence of the study lies with obtaining a greater understanding of teachers' perceptions of

how they view intervention or interference with children's learning as they (teachers) teach art.

Intervention/Interference in Children's Art Development

Children's art, is usually done for the pleasure of expressing ideas and imagination. Cohen and Gainer (1976) state that when children are "given material, they proceed according to individual interests and capabilities" (p. 35). Lowenfeld and Brittain (1987) emphasize that art for the child is

> something quite different. For a child, art is primarily a means of expression. No two children are alike, and, in fact, a child is not static, but is constantly growing and changing, with increasing perception, understanding, and interpretation of the environment. A child is a dynamic being; art becomes a language of thought, so that art expression changes as the child grows. (p. 7)

Children, therefore, tend to bring out their feelings and moods, thoughts, and interests in their art production. They also reflect the knowledge of their environment in their art works as they draw and paint things that are familiar and things they have been exposed to.

Gardner and Perkins (1989) state that "art often does not yield up its secrets to the casual look." They further state that "looking is not enough, the art in the art must be looked for. One sees the tree but misses how its moody branches clutch at the sky or, in an abstract, one sees the colors but misses their dynamics, how they romp along left and right across the canvas." (p. 119). Children's art in particular has greatly suffered in this respect since prior to the latter half of the nineteenth century when children's drawings were seen primarily as unskilled and primitive attempts at representation

and therefore were not given any serious attention. (Gardner and Perkins, 1989). However, there has been an increased growth of interest in child art development since the end of the nineteenth century. Researchers like Golomb, Kellogg, Lubin and Poulsen, Lowenfeld and Brittain have examined child art with the intent of focusing on theoretical stages of artistic development. Freeman (1980) and Goodnow (1977) have also made use of drawings to expose the child's cognitive strategies such as planning and sequencing. While other researchers have also found that children's drawings may look odd not because the child lacks some set of skills possessed by the adult, but rather because the child's goals differ from those of the adult. The child is guided more by the goal of simplicity, lack of ambiguity, and visual logic than by the goal of realism. (Arnheim, 1974, Golomb, 19Ɛ1, Schaeffer-Simmern, 1948). Therefore, teachers of art have a need in recognizing and understanding children's art development in order to be able to interact with and guide them properly. However, Lowenfeld and Brittain (1987) state that

> sometimes teachers, intrigued by the beauty of children's drawings and paintings, will save these paintings and admire them as examples of true spontaneous art. Occasionally, teachers may go a step further and suggest the proper colors or correct forms. While professing enthusiasm for the freshness and directness of children's paintings, they impose their own color schemes, proportions, and manner of painting upon children. (p. 7)

This kind of comment seems to put teachers of art in a very precarious position, whereby they may be constantly questioning their impact on children. Taken to the extreme, a teacher may not

want to guide children during art production fearing that his/her "own color schemes, proportions, and manner of painting" may be imposed on the children. At best, Lowenfeld and Brittain's comment should sensitize teachers to the possibility of imposition in art production. This sensitivity is displayed when a teacher questions the unconscious influence he/she may be having on the children.

However, the issue of imposition goes beyond what one teacher does or does not do in the classroom. The issue extends into programmatic instruction, computerized curriculum, and standardized grading system–all that make ready-made teaching and learning possible in schools. Constrained by politicians who want quick and easy answers, industrialists who desire a particular set of skills, educators who attempt to automate teaching and learning to provide the quick and easy answers, schools have little or no choice but to succumb to ready-made learning. This, however, has its costs as observed by Piaget (1953)

> the school tends too often to impose ready-made learning instead of encouraging inquiry; but we seldom realize it, because a pupil who simply repeats what he has been taught appears to give positive returns and we do not suspect what spontaneous activities, what fertile curiosity, may have been stifled in him[her]. In art, however, where nothing will normally replace what may well be irrevocably destroyed by adult pressure, it is all too clear that a problem arises which involves the whole of our usual system of education. (p. 23)

In educating children, therefore, how can adults interact without destroying the child's own natural creative ability and the aesthetic appreciation of the child which is projected in her/his unique ways of expression?. Can children be free to deviate from a standard way

of painting and be able to experiment during art production? Can they have the opportunity to grow and produce their own works at their own pace or level? Does a rigid environment, thus, suggest the presence of interference in an art class?

Piaget (1953) states that

> art education more than any other form of education must not be content with the external transmission and passive acceptance of a ready-made truth or ideal. It must above all train that aesthetic spontaneity and creative ability which already manifest their presence in the young child. Beauty, like truth, is of value only when re-created by those who discover it. (p. 23)

How do teachers, therefore, resist external transmission and passive acceptance, but cultivate aesthetic spontaneity and creative ability in their children as they teach art? I wonder how teachers enable children to discover their (children's) world and guide them to express their discovery. And, if ready-made teaching would be nothing more than a regurgitation of someone else's truth, how is the art class set up?

When a child is guided to discover his/her surroundings and recreate this discovery in art form, an "inside-out learning" occurs. Eisner (1988) explains that "what has emerged in the field over the past few years is a conception of the child that conceives of development primarily from the outside in, rather than from the inside out" (p. 19). Does this imply that conditions which interfere with children's art do exist in the form of "outside-in" art instruction? Does outside-in learning encourage the child to reproduce others' (adults) versions of reality? Does a form of

interference occur when a child indicates that a particular activity would have been done differently if allowed?

Lowenfeld (1957) states that "most children express themselves freely and creatively if adult interference does not inhibit them" (p. 10). I wonder how teachers are able to deal with the understanding of a child's real need while teaching art, and how they structure their art classes as they are guided by the child's thinking, feeling, and perceiving.

As the literature in art education suggests, interference in children's art often brings about changes in the way they express themselves and affects their creative ability, their art development and growth. Could teacher-child interaction, therefore, lead to a disruption in children's independent discovery and the confidence they ought to have in their works?. When a child's art is interfered with, is the open, free, and curious experimental approach toward discovering new things interrupted? And, does the child adopt a prescribed, rigid, and directed approach?

Read (1953) emphasizes that

> art is not an arbitrary discipline to which the child has to be subjected; it is a discipline inherent in the natural order and in conforming to this discipline the child finds a perfect freedom. (p. 25)

How can art teachers be aware of the possibility of suppressing the instinctual and emotional components of children's individual personality? How can art be appropriately taught to enhance children's intuition, intellect, imagination, and abstraction?

Children, like adults, have many experiences arising from their daily activities. These experiences include those that take place at

home, school, play and in the community in which they live. And children bring to each new experience the insight acquired from their previous experiences. It is in allowing children to build upon their personal experiences that their uniqueness is emphasized and reinforced. I wonder if disregarding their individual life experiences in the production of art could suggest a condition of interference.

Gaitskell, Hurwitz, and Day, (1982) state that "an important value of the art process is the way art activity reflects or expresses the personalities of children" (p. 140). They continue by stating that "personality is usually considered to be a complex of behavior dealing with temperament, character, and intellect" (p.140) In working with children, therefore, teachers seem to walk a fine line between intervention and interference as they realize that there are as many different personalities as there are different children. I wonder if teachers prepare to vary their gesture, approach, strategy, and comments from one child to another if disregarding this could constitute a condition of interference.

Irving Kaufman states that "there is little doubt that all art work, whether in the classroom or artist's studio, captures some individual quality of the creator, that the form has locked in its essence some residue of the psychological nature that shaped it" (see Gaitskell, Hurwitz, & Day, 1982, p. 140). How do teachers therefore allow and strive for free expression of children's individual quality and attributes during art lessons?

Feldman (1970) identifies the task of art education as that of "uniting art and life–at least in the subculture of the school" (p.

137). If teachers, need to help their children to unite art and life, how do they understand the children's life outside the school? And how do they familiarize themselves with the culture and environment from which these children come?

As suggested in the literature, children use art as a natural mode of expression and communication. They speak out their minds, express their thoughts, feelings and imagination in pictorial form. Cohen and Gainer (1976) state that children's "art combines ideas and feelings inextricably. The concentration characteristic of children's artistic production releases emotions as well as satisfies the need to communicate. Fulfilling these needs is one of the reasons children find art activities so satisfying" (p. 39).

How does the teacher then provide the right conditions that are conducive to the learning of art? Right conditions in this sense means that which the teacher sets up, allows for, accepts as a way of generating an atmosphere or environment. How do children express themselves as they relate their background to their art works? Where interference/intervention exists, consciously or unconsciously, it is important that a research be conducted to investigate its sources and the forms it takes in a classroom setting in order to improve art education programs.

Intervention/Interference and Pedagogical Arguments

The subject of intervention and interference cannot be fully discussed without a reference to the age-long pedagogical argument of child-centered teaching versus discipline-based teaching. Central to this controversy is the issue of the level of control and

direction necessary in a classroom. The argument about the level of classroom control which can be deemed helpful to the children also touches upon the nature-nurture controversy. On the one side of the continuum are those like Victor Lowenfeld and Herbert Read who believe that what is there to be known exists already within every child (nature) and the role of a teacher is only to help a child in discovering it and assist as knowledge naturally unfolds within the child. On the other side are those who seem to believe that a child's mind is bare (tabula rasa) and open, waiting to be shaped, filled, and molded by a competent and knowledgeable teacher (nurture). The Getty center for education in the Arts was instrumental in promoting the latter in the 1980s (Irwin, 1989).

The level of control in a classroom and how learning is structured and conducted invariably reflect a teacher's position along this continuum. Whatever are the merits and demerits of one's position, however, it is important to note that teachers seem to be in a difficult position in drawing the line between intervention and interference.

Kennedy and Mitchell (1980) quoted a teacher who states that

> we know that unless the child can make sense of a situation, learning is extremely difficult, or occurs not at all. I would argue that a great deal of what goes on in the schools is nonsense, for unless curriculum and learning are firmly rooted in situations that students can relate to, substance largely goes by the board. (p. 8)

The problem of achieving a reasonable balance between a laissez faire teaching situation and that of a highly structured (almost autocratic) learning situation where conditions are controlled has been an ongoing debate among art educators. Where

lesson plans must be regularly prepared and school calendars strictly adhered to, teachers often find themselves with little or no room to maneuver; consequently, the kind of flexibility and freedom advocated by some educators may be unrealistic. Rafferty (1987) succinctly summarized this dilemma as follows:

> Lowenfeld and Brittain. . . . insist that the teacher should not force his or her particular form of expression on the child. On the surface this appears [to be] a defensible method, but it is not clear how an individual can remain uninfluential in a situation such as a classroom setting where myriad conditions and considerations demand attention and have to be addressed in sustaining a sense of order. When placed in the context of the classroom, the above proposal for the teaching of art appears inconsistent. That is, it lauds freedom of creative expression while ignoring the school as an institution that has historically valued compliance with authority. (p. 12)

Although planning for and structuring of conditions in a rigid manner may sometimes be inevitable in a school, I wonder if art classes can still be organized in a way which allows children's minds and emotions to be freely expressed. This is crucial for children who are expected to develop as individuals and who are expected to develop a sense of wonder at the extraordinary diversity of people's minds as exhibited in the art objects that have been produced over the centuries. I also wonder how teachers redirect children in order to avoid what the teachers perceive as a risk of interference as they help children to be more thoughtful, relating ideas to themselves, their culture, and to their environment.

Chapter Summary

Teaching and learning in a classroom setting are predominantly characterized by purposeful interactions between teachers and children. Occasionally, teachers attempt to redirect children by instigating positive actions or discouraging negative ones. This redirection is referred to in this study as intervention. When the opposite happens, interference is said to have occurred.

If it is conceivable that teacher-student interactions lead to positive consequences, it is equally conceivable that, sometimes, negative consequences may occur from teacher's actions. When this occurs in a classroom, it is referred to as being site-specific.

Teachers are particularly concerned about their influence because several writers (such as Lowenfeld and Erdt) have suggested that children possess some innate art ability which requires little or no adult guidance to come into fruition. Some of these writers go as far as suggesting that almost all adult's influence on children in art constitutes interference.

However, in a school setting, children interact with teachers (adults) to bring about purposeful learning. An adult's influence is inevitable in a school setting because art takes place within a social setting which requires interaction with others. Also, it is not unusual for some children to require extra stimulation, encouragement, and redirection to enhance their learning. Hence, interaction and intervention are a necessary part of teaching and learning in schools. I wonder if the lack of flexibility and an individualized approach in an art class may suggest the presence of interference in a classroom. Although intervention/interference is a

difficult issue, how interaction turns into interruption or intervention and then into interference will continue to be a concern to teachers, especially those who teach art.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

Pelto and Pelto (1978) defined methodology as the "logic-in-use involved in selecting particular observational techniques, assessing their yield of data, and relating these data to theoretical propositions" and research techniques as the "pragmatics of primary data collections" (p. 3). To these authors, methodology refers to "the structure of procedures and transformational rules whereby the scientist shifts information up and down this ladder of abstraction in order to produce and organize increased knowledge" (p. 2). The "logic-in-use" for this study can be described as a qualitative methodology.

According to Bodgan and Biklen (1982), a qualitative research is "an umbrella term to refer to several research strategies that share certain characteristics" (p. 2). These characteristics are:

(a) qualitative research has the natural setting as the direct source of data and the researcher is the key instrument,

(b) qualitative research is descriptive,

(c) qualitative researchers are concerned with process in a setting rather than simply with outcomes or products,

(d) qualitative research tends to be analyzed inductively, and

(e) "meaning" is of essential concern in the qualitative approach. (Bodgan & Biklen, 1982, pp. 27-29).

This study is concerned with knowing or understanding how teachers make sense of their interactions with children, how they attempt to intervene without interrupting or interact without

interfering in their children's progress. Qualitative research methodology is preferred over the others because it allows for a rich description of people, places, and conversations, in-depth understanding of a phenomenon in its natural setting, and a description of a complex phenomenon which is beyond the domain of statistical analysis.

The pragmatics of primary data collection for this study are interview and participant observation techniques. The primary intents of this study are to gain an understanding of how teachers make meaning of their interactions with children and how they make meaning of the possible consequences of these interactions. To achieve these goals, interview techniques are used to collect data from selected teachers. Interview questions are also open-ended; thus, allowing free responses from the teachers.

Best (1977) states that the primary purpose of research is to discover "principles that have universal application but to study a whole population. . . .would be impractical, if not impossible" (p. 267). For example, it would have been impractical for me to have studied all the teachers in the elementary schools of Alberta given my constraints. Moreover, the purpose of this study is for me to gain insights to a very difficult aspect of teaching, intervention/ interference in a classroom, and not necessarily to make a universal generalization. Hopefully, these insights will be valuable to me, to those who may be interested in this aspect of teaching as well as to those who are willing to extend the research further.

Three teachers were chosen to participate in this study and data was collected within a period of three months. The number of

teachers and time for data collection were solely determined by resource availability and convenience. Also, the teachers chosen were those who showed interest and volunteered to get involved in the study. Vidich (1969) remarked that "participant observation enables the research worker to secure his [her] data within the mediums, symbols, experiential worlds which have meaning to his [her] respondents. Its intent is to prevent imposing alien meanings upon the actions of the subject" (p. 79). Therefore, the researcher makes deliberate efforts to withhold the impulse to impose alien meanings. In making participant observation, the researcher had to check from time to time with the informants and find out if information gathered was interpreted correctly.

Spradley (1980, p. 78) discussed a spectrum of roles that an observer may assume from a complete observer to that of a complete participant. Several authors (for example Spradley, 1980, Hill-Burnett, 1979, Spradley and McCurdy, 1975, Vidich, 1969) emphasized the need to participate in a social situation as observation is being made in order to obtain direct experience and to get the feel of events. It is believed that by participating, the researcher will have a closer observation than one who has always been an outsider. For this study, I was participating by assisting selected teachers in their art classes. This procedure allowed me to observe these teachers from the planning stage to the execution stage of their activities. It also allowed me to observe responses of their students and how teachers vary their actions from one student to another.

The general description of this study is a participant-observation method using a qualitative study approach. The merit of this kind of method/approach was described by Bissex (1987) who observed that

> the process of observing even a single individual sensitizes us that much more to other individuals. . . . I focused on two children but I learned about twenty-three. . . . Thus classroom-based case-study research by teachers becomes a powerful instrument for self-directed in-service education and staff development. (pp. 14-15)

Descriptive Procedure for Data Collection

In this section, the general procedure for obtaining data for the study is discussed. This includes the selection of a site, the unit of analysis, and the method for collecting the data.

Site Selection

In order to have access to the type of data and in the form required for the study, the researcher had to take the role of a classroom teacher in an elementary school as well as an assistant art teacher to other classes where observations were being made. With this arrangement, the researcher had access to the art curriculum in use in the school, the time required for art lessons, and the type of relationship needed to build trust and rapport both with the students and teachers. Vidich (1969) noted that "in a broad sense the social position of the observer determines what he (she) is likely to see and what an observer will see will depend largely on his(her) particular position in a network of relationships" (p. 78). Fine and Sandstrom (1988) also acknowledged that the position of a

researcher is of great importance in a participant observation study of children.

The researcher was present at the school throughout the period of data collection. This gave her the opportunity to interact with teachers and students, in and out of the classroom, on a daily basis. This provision also enabled her to gain entrance into the social setting and obtain the confidence and trust of the children, co-staff members as well as parents. Therefore, the researcher was not seen as an outsider, but as one who belonged to the setting.

Unit of Analysis

The unit of analysis for this study is an elementary school in Alberta. Observations were made at the classroom level. The three teachers selected for this study were assisted and observed during their art lessons. The grades taught by these teachers were grades one, one/two split (special needs), and two/three split. Pseudonyms were used for all proper names except for mine in this study. Therefore, the grade one teacher is referred to as Teacher Anne. The grade one/two split teacher is referred to as Teacher Joan, while the grade two/three split teacher is referred to as Teacher Catherine. Also, the students were generally referred to as children except when specifically mentioned by pseudonyms.

Data Collection

As mentioned earlier, data was collected through interviews and field notes. The participating teachers were first interviewed prior to the observation of their art lessons/activities and other interviews were conducted after each or a series of observations

had been made within their classrooms. The first round of interviews was conducted to collect data on teachers' stock of knowledge with reference to their understanding and opinion of situations that may lead to intervention and interference. The second round of interviews were to clarify observations made during the teacher's classes and to solicit their explanations of activities or events observed. However, the general use of the word "interference" was avoided during interviews since its negative connotation could have affected the information gathered. Instead, special notes were made about comments that were related to dissatisfaction, teacher-mistake, and general feeling of guilt among teachers. Figure 2 provides a schematic plan for the data collection exercise.

This exercise includes recording observations by the use of field notes which was started on the researcher's first day of data collection and was continued throughout my time at the school. Data was also recorded about the school environment, the school's emphasis on art, art displays and exhibition, and the facilities and materials available for art activities. Data on specific observations of children's behavior in art classes, and teachers' teaching methods during art classes were also recorded. Efforts were made to include personal reflections within the period of data collection.

Ethnographic Records: In making an ethnographic record, Spradley (1980) states that the way language is used is very significant. The major part of any ethnographic record consists of written field notes. Written language is used for encoding things seen or heard. It is, therefore, important to be able to rightly

interpret things heard or observed. The main language spoken in this setting was English but the way language was used had to be understood in the right context. The example below (Recorded in Grade 1/2 split class) taken from my field notes illustrates this point.

It was 11.00am and the children had been making a still-life drawing of a thermos and a garbage-can that were set on a table in front of the class. As Teacher Joan walked by Donna, the following conversation was recorded.

Teacher Joan: Your thermos and garbage-can are floating in the air.

Donna: Okay, I know.

Donna immediately started drawing a line under the objects she had drawn. Even though "floating in air" in the above conversation is not new to me, I had to ask Teacher Joan what she meant in order for me to understand and be able to interpret what I heard and observed correctly. Teacher Joan told me that she had taught the children to always draw a background in their works so that it will not look as if the objects are "floating in the air". The children seem to understand the tacit culture of their classrooms and also know what their teachers expectations are, as is recorded in Donna's response "Okay, I know." This confirms what Davies (1980) notes when he stated that children behave according to rules of their own childhood culture by interacting across cultures according to varying sets of explicit and tacit rules. However, since I was new to this classroom I had to learn these tacit and explicit rules. In addition to that, I often asked the teachers questions to clarify what I observed to be

sure that I was interpreting actions and verbal messages correctly while still using the original language or words used by those being observed.

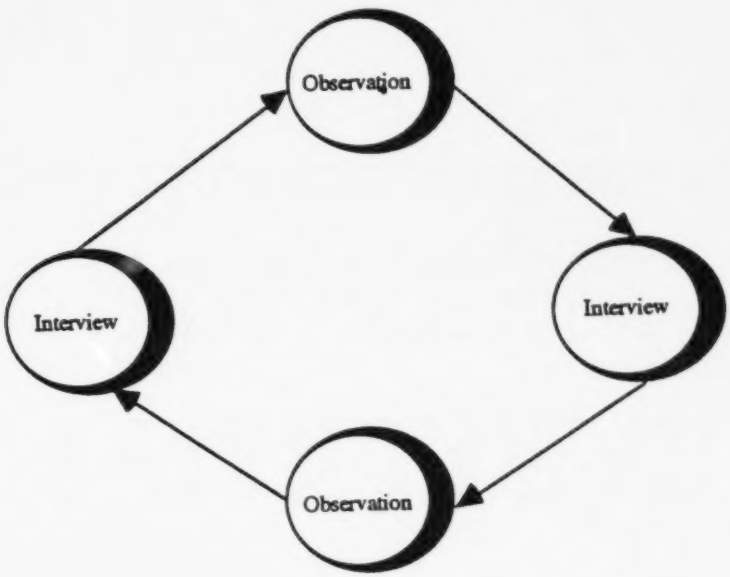

Figure 2: A Model for Data Collection

As explained earlier, the researcher saw herself first and foremost as a researcher, while those being observed saw her as a teacher/teacher-aide. This dual role was believed to have brought some advantages to this study and also made the data richer.

Gaining Entry Into The School Setting

The school where this study was carried out was chosen because it offered me a teaching position where I had the opportunity to be able to blend with the program, thereby making it

easy to be a participant observer. However, Spradley (1980) states that to enter into a culture "involves alternating between the insider and outsider experience, and having both simultaneously" (p.57). That is, I had to become part of the school/classrooms as I was daily immersed in their activities in order to discover the participant's point of view. At the same time, I had to be able to consciously stand back and consider or question the tacit knowledge of a situation as I observed.

In order to carry out research in the school, a research request letter was sent to the Principal of the school. The letter described the objectives of the research and my intention of being a participant observer. The letter was approved by the school board and I later contacted the school principal in order to obtain formal approval and to make necessary arrangements for conducting the study.

The school is a private school in Alberta and it has an enrollment population of 159 students. There are eight different classes within the school and these include some split classes and also a pre-kindergarten and a kindergarten program.

Even though I had been part of the school since the beginning of the school year (1991/92) data collection did not start until April 1992. Teacher Anne's class had twenty-two children, twelve girls and ten boys. There were nine children, five boys and four girls in Teacher Joan's class (which is also referred to as the special education class) while Teacher Catherine's class had nineteen children, eight boys and eleven girls. Teacher Joan's children were originally in either Teacher Anne's class or in Teacher Catherine's

class. These children were moved to Teacher Joan's class after they had been noted for having learning disorders or serious behavioral problems. Each one of these classes also had a teacher's aide that assisted both the teachers and the children, but I took up the role of the teacher's aide whenever they did art and I was there for participant observation. All the art classes were held in the home classrooms except for a few classes that were held in the industrial arts room at the high school.

I was definitely not seen as a complete stranger by the teachers and children. This was shown as they freely related with me. The children often pulled me over to see their works and ask me to fix their zippers or their hair. The teachers also asked me to pass art materials to the children and also help out with classroom chores. I always had a little notebook with me where I recorded field notes while observing in the class. The condensed notes consisted of key words that indicate the categories of experience, definitions and responses. The children sometimes asked me about what I was writing and I told them that I needed to write somethings down about their art classes. They felt all right with my explanations and after the first few times, no one asked me any more questions about what I was writing. However, I had to arrange to do interviews with the three teachers that had been chosen for my study.

The teachers were interviewed individually and these were tape recorded. These interviews took place in their classrooms either during lunch break or after school hours,depending on which was more convenient for both of us.

Stated below is a short biographical sketch of the teachers

Short Biographical Sketch of the Teachers

Teacher Anne

Teacher Anne had been teaching grade one for two years. Prior to that, she had taught kindergarten for two years, so this is her fifth year of teaching at this same school. She has a bachelor of education degree with a major in language arts and she took one junior course in art education. She said she personally loves art, enjoys doing craft, drawing, coloring and experimenting with different art materials.

Teacher Joan

This year is Teacher Joan's first year of teaching in a structured school setting. She was previously a part-time art teacher at an after-school setting for a year. She has a masters degree in visual arts (specifically in painting) and also a bachelors degree in visual art as well as in education. She said she tends to see herself more as an artist as she has for many years been very involved in pursuing her carrier as an artist. Presently, she wants to gain more teaching experience. She said she really enjoys doing art and loves encouraging children to develop their creative abilities.

Teacher Catherine

Teacher Catherine has had one year teaching experience at a different school prior to this year. She is from a different province and this is her first teaching experience in Alberta. She has a degree in physical education and she said this is her first year

teaching art and she does not do a lot of it. Her class is a grade two/three split which is something new to her, too. The class she taught the year before was a grade two class.

Reflections on the first set of interviews

The first set of interviews with the teachers gave me an insight into what kinds of teaching styles they adopt in the teaching of art and at the same time, I was able understand how they view interaction with their students. I could see major differences and/or similarities. For example, all the teachers agreed that interaction is very important between the teacher and children in the classroom in order for learning to take place; however, how this interaction takes place within the classroom is very different from one teacher to the other. Teacher Joan states "art is my life, I enjoy it so much that I want my children to get the very best from it." On the other hand, Teacher Catherine stated "I just simply get by in art. I would trade it for another subject if I could." Perhaps one must reexamine the perspective of the participants since they bring a frame of reference to the event (Wilson, 1977). I also agree with Schutz (1973) who says that it is vital to understand the way in which people define their situation. What might appear to be false or inconsistent according to my perspectives and interpretations as a researcher may not be so according to the participants' perspectives. In clarifying what I heard as I interviewed the teachers, I had to understand their individual positions as they taught art.

Teacher Anne views interaction in her class as a struggle since she tries to deal with individual differences among her children. Fcr example she stated the following.

Teacher Anne: It's really difficult to know how to teach art in order to suit every child's need. Some children get going on their own as soon as you give them an example while others can't do much but copy every example you make.

It was interesting to note that Teacher Anne seemed to be struggling with her teaching style in art as she interacted with the children. However, she believed that she was doing the very best for the children considering her constraints. This is implied in her comment:

Teacher Anne: I really can't think of a better way of teaching art. There are many odds against us, like not having adequate resources, but I'm doing my best.

The comments below seem to be suggesting that teachers in the study are aware of the impact that their background knowledge of art has on their teaching of art as they talk about their teaching styles.

Teacher Joan: I believe in teaching the basic and formal steps in doing art. At the same time, I believe that children have to be allowed to be creative and they should be free to express themselves. I think that one can intervene in children's art to correct a wrong impression or even just to guide them. Anyway, I think that children should be allowed to experiment since there can't be only one way of doing art.

Teacher Catherine : the only types of art that I do are those termed as holiday or seasonal art. What I do mainly is to depend on a lot of photocopied materials and ask the children to color the pictures. Sometimes we do some "cut and paste" projects by following specific instructions.

However, when I asked the question, "Are there any specific activities in your classroom that you are not satisfied with?" the teachers stated:

Teacher Joan : Yes. As you might soon discover, my children are very impatient, very hyper and disruptive. Sometimes, I see myself abruptly disrupting or even putting an end to an art lesson (which is the last thing I wanna do) so that I can maintain order in my classroom.

Teacher Catherine: Oh, yeah. The whole process. I didn't really want to teach art. I wish there was a way of avoiding it. Art has never been a strong point for me.

Teachers Anne & Joan were both relaxed at the interviews as they declared that they would be looking forward to what comes out of the study. Teacher Catherine, however, became uncomfortable about my coming into her class regularly and she suggested that "actually, I'll prefer you coming to my class only on invitation."

At the end of these interviews, I wondered how Teacher Catherine's attitude would affect my study. Would I have to discontinue working with Teacher Catherine and her class? I saw that Teacher Catherine was not pleased with the idea of teaching art. Could my background in art have posed a problem? Did she feel threatened by my presence and the type of questions that I asked? All these questions went through my mind as I reflected on the interview. However, I decided to visit her class whenever I was invited and I just hoped that the situation would get better.

Data Analysis and Credibility

I had hoped that the way the data was recorded from the beginning would affect the subsequent steps. Therefore, the field notes were as detailed and meticulous as possible. This was to help make patterns more apparent at a later stage. A constant interaction with the data as it was entered in the field notes was

also expected to provide the illumination needed to make sense of the data and to formulate further questions that were later used while I interviewed the teachers.

The credibility requirement involves the establishment of a process that enables an independent reader to believe in the interpretation of the data. This as observed by Stake (1988) does not mean replication of the study by a different researcher. This author states that "we should note that validity depends on the use to which the findings are put. Accuracy of observing and reporting is not a matter of everyone seeing and reporting the same thing. Observers have different vantage points. Scenes change" (p. 263). The same author also emphasizes that the establishment of completeness, which also affects credibility, involves the researcher ensuring that all methods within the disposal of the researcher were used to obtain data that could be used to verify another data.

Several suggestions for enhancing credibility found in the literature include prolonged observation at site, and peer debriefing (Lincoln & Guba, 1985), and "dynamic objectivity" (Bissex, 1987, p.13), to prevent what Miller (1969) called "over-rapport." To satisfy these requirements, the researcher was at the site for three months, and kept a detailed journal that was examined by an independent interested person. Occasionally, briefing sessions were held with the researcher's advisor and peers who were interested in the study. Also, quoting Evelyn Fox Keller, Bissex (1987) reported that

> dynamic objectivity aims at a form of knowledge that grants to the world around us its independent integrity but does so in a way that remains cognizant of, indeed relies on, our connectivity with that world. In this, dynamic objectivity is not unlike empathy, a form of knowledge of other persons that draws explicitly on the commonalty of feelings and expressions in order to enrich one's understanding of another in his or her own right. (p. 13)

Therefore, by moving close to these teachers and children, it is expected that the ability to empathize with them would stem from our (the researcher, the children, and the teachers) commonalty of feelings and experiences–a process that should enhance the researcher's understanding rather than obscure it.

Chapter Summary

This chapter has dealt with the methodology and design of the study. My selection of methodology incorporates the reflections of the participants' perspective. And the position taken in the design pre-supposes that a lot of what goes on in any social situation is very much related to the everyday taken for granted behavior. Ethnographic research embodies the concept of discovering the participants' knowledge. Focus is however made on the teachers' interpretation of their interactions with children in their classrooms. References were made to procedure of identifying interference and intervention within this interaction. The next step is the search for categories and the identification of cultural domains. With this understanding, I moved on to analyze and interpret data collected and this will be explained fully in the next chapter.

CHAPTER FOUR

ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF DATA

Bodgan and Biklen (1982) explained that data analysis "involves working with data, organizing it, breaking it into manageable units, synthesizing it, searching for patterns, discovering what is important and what is to be learned, and deciding what you will tell others" (p. 145). In the same manner, the data collected for this study was subjected to this procedure in order to make sense of the data and, more importantly, to answer the broad research questions presented earlier.

The basic factors affecting the way teachers in this study interact with their children while carrying out their task of teaching art have been summed up in this chapter under what I refer to as "recurring cultural themes." I will demonstrate how teachers view conditions in their classrooms that relate to interference/intervention within their interaction with children by analyzing the data collected.

Data Analysis

In analyzing the data, I made cultural domains. Spradley (1980) defined a cultural domain as "a category of cultural meaning that includes other smaller categories" (p. 88). However, since the activities in the school setting are very many, I will present several domains and analyze an example that is related to my area of focus. Examples of domains that I analyzed include; kinds of children, kinds

of teachers/instructors, kinds of children's feelings while doing art, kinds of influence caused by competition, kinds of ways teachers help children, kinds of interference related activities, kinds of people who worked with children, kinds of art taught, parts of special school programs, results of intervention, results of doing art, reasons for being sad, reasons for exhibiting art works, and steps in teaching an art lesson.

In analyzing the domain "reasons for being sad" as an example, I came up with the following: Hurt by classmates, not winning a prize, not identified as the best, not being helped by the teacher, being told to take art works home, not finishing art work, and being disturbed by other classmates constitute reasons for being sad.

It was not practical to fully extrapolate every category gleaned from the study when analyzing data because there is a great network of activities within the school. Dobbert (1982) states that "definitions are sought through questions to bring out the dimension of a category and to find its boundaries. Relationships are uncovered through comparative or taxonomic questions" (p.13). I therefore started looking for similarities and contrasts among domains in order to see the relationship between the domains. Below is an example among three domains:

Kinds of teachers/instructors, kinds of art taught and kinds of children.

The first and second domains are quite distinct from the third in that the teachers or instructors dictate and choose the kind of art to be done. On the other hand, the children are those being taught and they are supposed to respond to what the teacher tells them.

In making more focused observations, I realized that even though I was more interested in the kinds of interaction between the teachers and the students, sometimes other people/events come into the situation: parents, special school activities, counselors, therapists, nurses, and the junior and senior high school staff--all having parts to play in this interaction. At this point, I decided to make several taxonomic diagrams and two of these are included in the Appendix.

Several informal and formal interviews followed. I asked specific dyadic and triadic contrast questions and got the answers from my recorded fieldnotes and from new observations made.

Examples of my dyadic contrast questions are: How is art used as a privilege different from art done basically for the purpose of exhibition? In what ways are stereotype art different from other art? In what ways do interference caused by children differ from those caused by teachers?

The triadic contrast questions involve using three categories looking for similarities and contrasts at the same time. Some of my triadic contrast questions include: out of these three kinds of interference, which two are more linked together and which one is different (making drawing examples, providing photocopy drawings and throwing children's works out)? Answer: The first and second ones are more related as they are mainly influenced by the teacher while the last one is influenced by the parents.

The triadic contrast questions made it easier for me to be able to recognize the cultural meanings within the domains. I further made more selected observations based on the dimensions of

contrasts. At this point, I arranged all the contrasts together and developed them into the figure that follows.

Domain		Interfering Conditions									
		Behavioral Problems	Helping	Discipline	Giving Reward	Exhibition	Grading	Company	Throwing artworks away	Sticking to day plan	Lack of resources
Main Sources of Interference	Teacher	NP	P	P	P	P	P	P	NP	P	P
	Children	P	P	NP	NP	NP	NP	P	NP	NP	NP
	School	NP	NP	P	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	P	P
	Visiting Instructors	NP	NP	NP	P	P	P	P	NP	NP	NP
	Parents	NP	NP	NP	NP	P	P	P	P	NP	NP
	Others	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	P	NP	NP	NP
Results of Interference (Effects on Children)	Disturbed Class	P	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	P
	Crying	NP	NP	P	NP	P	NP	P	P	NP	NP
	Upset	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	NP
	Frustration	NP	NP	NP	P	P	P	P	NP	NP	NP
	Withdrawal	NP	NP	NP	P	NP	P	P	NP	P	NP
	Copying	NP	NP	NP	P	NP	NP	P	NP	P	NP
	Satisfied	NP	P	NP	NP	P	P	P	NP	NP	NP
	Happy	NP	P	NP	P	P	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP
	Kept busy	NP	P	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP
	Lack of experiments	NP	NP	P	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	P	P

Key: P = Present. NP = Not Present.

Figure 3: Kinds of Interfering Conditions

Figure 3 represents the different kinds of interference stated by the teachers, the conditions for interference and the effect on children. This diagram seems to reveal more clearly how related the attributes are to one another. It generated further questions which led to fully elaborated conditions. An example of the questions I further asked was: what were the reasons for having special art and what were the children's reactions?

At this point, I was able to come up with a number of recurring themes which are discussed below.

Recurring Themes

Spradley (1980) defines themes as "assertions that have a high degree of generality" (p.141)

In order to categorize (by searching for recurring themes) what I was observing, I had to make interpretive judgment since the categories identified provide descriptions of how the participants apparently view their cultural scene within the unit of analysis (Leiter, 1971). Spradley and McCurdy (1975) also state that "categories are not given to us 'carte blanche', they are inventions of ways to classify and organize experience" (p. 25). I had several interviews with the teachers, and their answers, along with my field notes, helped me in discovering the classificatory principle behind each revealed theme. This helped in developing insight into some of the puzzles I encountered. After immersing myself in the cultural setting being studied for a few days, I withdrew from the scene and spent some time reflecting on what I had seen and heard. This included reviewing my field notes in an intensive manner. In

this way, I was able to discover new relationships among domains in order to discover some recurring themes.

I discovered that themes seem to be occurring over and over again in numerous situations and domains. These themes seem to apply to every part of the culture and the different domains within the cultural setting are linked up through them. Several recurring themes were discovered in this study but I have decided to focus on five of them. These five themes seem to be the most dominant and they tend to include the smaller themes. Though these themes are different from each other, they are very much related since nothing occurs in isolation within the classroom and the whole idea of teaching and learning art thereby interacting, does not take place in isolation but collectively.

These themes have emerged within my study as they form an overlap in the cultures between teachers and children. In this light, the themes are discussed using examples of data which is meant to give the reader insights into how the teachers in this study interpret their actions and interactions within the study.

The five recurring themes include:

1. Exhibition:

   The rule to do exhibition in the school determines the quality of a child's art experience.

2. Visitor initiated art:

   Visitors to the school unintentionally determine the quality of the child's art experience.

3. Teachers' background:

   Teachers' background affect the decisions they make while interacting with and introducing children to art

4. Available resources:

   The availability of resources affect the art experience children are exposed to in the classrooms.

5. Parental response:

   Parental response to children's art affects the quality of the child's art experience.

The first theme is developed from the domain "reasons for exhibiting artworks" and the theme is discussed below.

Exhibition:

The rule to do exhibition in the school determines the quality of a child's art experience.

The act of exhibiting children's artworks was seen as a part of the school tradition which seemed to be an expectation of every teacher. Even though the teachers state that it is not a written rule, it tends to be an indication of a hardworking and busy teacher. Usually, toward the end of the art lessons, I observed teachers hurrying the children up by asking them to finish their art works. In order to save some time and also make sure that the children have "finished art works" for exhibition, teachers help the children to complete one or two things in their artworks or give advice on which part of the art project to work on.

An example of this was observed during one of my visits to Teacher Anne's class. The children were coloring photocopied

pictures of different flowers on large white sheets of (place mat size) paper. Teacher Anne had planned that the finished pictures would be laminated and used as place mats. These place mats were to be exhibited and given as presents to the children's mothers. It was close to Mother's Day and the mothers had been invited for lunch in class the following day. Teacher Anne announced to the class that she would be coming around to see the children's works. The children seemed to be very pleased as Teacher Anne came close to their tables offering to help finish one or two things on their pictures. This kind of help was very much welcomed as the children were heard inviting the teacher to sit beside them and help. Sammy said, "My grandma's (she was to represent Sammy's mother) gonna be proud of me, right teacher?" "I think she will, but we got to finish up with this coloring first so that I can laminate it," replied Teacher Anne.

In the above example, Teacher Anne later told me that she knew she shouldn't have helped the children but because they were short of time and all the pictures had to be laminated that day to be ready for the exhibition, she just had to come to their aid.

On another occasion I found out that things do not occur in isolation in the classroom. One thing seems to be contingent on another. I found out that exhibition is of great importance to the children, the teachers, parents and to the rest of the school. Sometimes, it seems to be more important than the children being taught. An example stressing this observation which I recorded as I observed in Teacher Catherine's class is stated below.

Teacher Catherine was teaching the children how to weave with construction paper. They had several colored strips of paper and were weaving these together while following specific patterns. She had told the class that the completed works were going to be exhibited in the hallway and this seemed to have put pressure on the children. I observed them sitting together in groups of two and three discussing how good they wanted the results to be so that other people in the school would admire them. Teacher Catherine went from one person to the other checking their work and helping them if they had problems. Jonny, who was having problems coordinating the different colors of paper together suddenly banged his hand on the table and cried for help. Teacher Catherine went by his side and told him not to worry. She patted his back as she sat down beside him and talked with him. Jonny asked if everybody's work had to be exhibited and the teacher said yes. She continued by saying that she could give him a helping hand. Jonny lightened up and pushed his strips of paper to her while she started it up and showed him how to continue. Jonny looked pleased but begged the teacher not to leave as she got up and told him to continue. The teacher said it was almost time to stop but she could help him later.

When I asked the teachers why they exhibit the children's works, several reasons were given. These include:

"showing others what we're doing in class"--Teachers Anne, Joan & Catherine.

"so the children can be proud of their works"--Teachers Anne, Joan & Catherine.

"every teacher does it"--Teacher Catherine.

"shows everyone that you're busy"--Teachers Anne & Catherine.

"it's part of the school tradition"--Teachers Anne, Joan & Catherine.

"to try and compare children's works"--Teachers Anne & Catherine.

"to beautify the class and hallway"--Teachers Anne, Joan & Catherine.

"to help the children learn to evaluate themselves"--Teacher Joan.

From these responses, I realized that exhibition was much more than just putting children's artworks on the wall/board. It seems to be of great relevance in terms of the school's expectations of the teachers. As well, it serves the functional role of beautifying the school. It is also supposed to project a pride of achievement in the children as well as the teachers when others admire their works. However, I question the quality of the art experiences that the children have as they interact with their teachers during art lessons.

I had noticed that the idea of "helping" children to do their art occurred in both Teacher Anne and Teacher Catherine's classes while Teacher Joan refused to help in this way. Instead, she gave more explanations on what was to be done and encouraged the children to do their works by themselves. I decided to find out what the teachers felt about this kind of help and they all commented that it should not be done. However, both Teachers Anne and Catherine

stated that they "helped" the children in order to save time and improve the circumstances in which it occurred. For example, making sure that each child had something good enough for exhibition. Teacher Joan, on the other hand, believes that whatever a child does is his/her work which should be exhibited the way it was done without anyone adding to or taking anything away from it. She feels that a child's artwork embodies the child's identity and this identity would be distorted if anyone "helped" in doing the art work.

Although the theme discussed above was originally developed from one main domain which is-"reasons for exhibiting artworks", several domains were related and discussed in developing the theme. Some of these other domains include, kinds of children, kinds of teachers, kinds of children's feelings while doing art, kinds of ways teachers help children, results of doing art, and steps in teaching an art class.

Another activity which is strongly related to exhibition is the children's participation in what I call "special art." Their involvement in "special art" thus leads to the second theme which is:

Visitor initiated art:

Visitors to the school unintentionally determine the quality of the child's art experience.

Special guests were often invited to the school for general school programs such as workshops on fire prevention, impaired driving prevention and bicycle safety. During these workshops, children participated in art that was basically done for the purpose

of "special exhibition" or for a reward/prize. This kind of art, which I refer to as "special art", was basically introduced by the visiting instructors and all the classes in the school participated in these programs either collectively or by individual classes. This "special art" included asking the children to make drawings about what they had learned and coloring-in photocopy drawings given out during the workshops. The completed works were either sent to the workshop presenter or graded and exhibited in the school. For example, the fireman had specifically arranged to come back to the school two weeks later to see the exhibits and award prizes to the children who did the "best" artworks. Children's artworks were exhibited in the main school hallway and some staff members along with the fireman graded and chose a child from each class as the winner of the award. The presenter of the workshop on impaired driving was also heard telling Teacher Catherine, "Please make sure that everyone's picture is sent to me and I'll send prizes back to those chosen for the best works."

I realized that the children were often excited about doing this kind of art as they sat together in little groups to discuss their ideas and settled down faster than usual to their work. I started taking the familiar as unfamiliar as I did not want to take their actions for granted but tried to find out what conditions motivated such actions. The teachers also noticed and commented about the children's attitudes.

Teacher Anne: These children are so busy. I can't believe it.

Researcher: What is responsible for that?

Teacher Anne: What do you think? Everyone wants to win a prize. I guess we should have invited guests come in at least once a week.

From Teacher Anne's comment "I can't believe it" I presumed that it seemed unusual for the children to be as busy as they were. It also seemed that the prize to be won was the motivating factor as stated by the teacher "everyone wants to win a prize". The children also confirmed this statement as I overheard the following conversation:

Sandra: I'm gonna make the best picture ever.

Shirley: Mine will be better.

Sandra: You see this smoke, (pointing to her picture) it will be so dark that it will cover the whole sky.

Shirley: Well, see these two kids playing with matches, (touching the drawing on her paper) their clothes will be on fire and they'll be shouting for help.

Sandra I'm gonna make mine so good so that I can win the prize.

Shirley: I wonder what the prize is. Whatever it is, I'm winning it.

In Teacher Joan's class, the incidents were also similar. While the children colored-in the drawings given to them by the magician who had been invited to do tricks on fire safety, Dean invited me to see his work.

Dean: Look at my picture Mrs. Michael. (Before I could respond) Do you know why it's so good?

Researcher: Why?

Dean: I want to get picked for the best coloring. If I win, I'll get the prize and I really wanna win.

Dean's explanation of making his picture "so good" was initiated by the prize to be won. And "getting picked" was subject to having the "best coloring" determined by the visiting instructors. I wonder what happens when a child with such an expectation as Dean does not get picked. I also wondered how the visiting instructors determine the "best artworks."

While observing the interaction between teachers and children during "special art" I noticed that the teachers' attitudes towards "helping" the children was also different from the usual. The teachers disassociate themselves or have minimal interaction with the children during "special art" activities. An example of this was noticed in Teacher Catherine's class as I observed her clearing her desk while the children were busy drawing.

Jimmy: Teacher, I need help please.

Teacher Catherine: (Raising her head) What is it, Jimmy? Jimmy walked to the teacher and showed his drawing to Teacher Catherine.

Jimmy: I don't know how to make the ladder all the way up to the window. Can you help me?

Teacher Catherine: Jimmy, I really can't help you. You've got to make it the way you want. The fireman said to make it your own way.

Jimmy: But I can't.

Teacher Catherine: Jimmy, you'll have to try it out. It won't be fair for me to help you and not help the rest of the class.

The interaction above illustrates that teachers refrain from intervening in children's art as a way to remain fair, which is

observed as they purposely stay away from "helping" the children but rather have them do their art "their own way." When I consulted with the different teachers to find out what their views were in relation to having "special art," they all responded differently. Teachers Anne and Catherine responded in favor of "special art" as they both commented

> Teacher Catherine: It's good to allow the children to meet and experience other people who probably instruct in other ways different from their regular teachers. And at least I didn't have to plan to teach another art class so, I really won't mind more of it.

> Teacher Anne: I like it. I can enjoy a little break from teaching. And also, the children had a good time and they worked hard at their projects. I must say that they were kind of stirred up with the idea of getting prizes but that's o. k., we need a little bit of that sometimes.

These responses illustrate that both teachers seemed pleased to have had "special art" take the place of their regular art lesson. They seemed to have a sense of relief from planning and teaching art while "special art" went on. However, Teacher Anne recognized that the effort put into the project by the children was instigated by the award but she was in favor of it ("we need a little bit of that sometimes"). Teacher Joan, on the other hand, spoke vehemently against "special art:"

> I don't agree with it at all. The poor children were mainly focused on the idea of winning prizes. You know, the sad thing is that a child who had put in his/her best effort, may not necessarily be recognized as producing the best art work. And apart from that, the so-called judges do not really know these children well enough to be able to determine their grades.

Teacher Joan's disagreement with the way "special art" is done portrays her recognition of the children as helpless "poor children" who are excitedly doing their best in art which may not be noted as good enough for a prize since the "judges do not know these children well enough. . . ." She advocates the necessity of a good knowledge of the children's ability in art (which the visiting instructors do not have) before grading their artworks. Teacher Joan related her opposition to "special art" to the frustration she has had in trying to intervene within the school:

> Teacher Joan: You know, I've tried several times to make the school see things differently, but all these activities seem to be so much part of the school tradition that my efforts have been fruitless. I don't think children should be subjected to competition in art or told to color photocopy drawings.
>
> Researcher: Why are you against the idea of competition and coloring activities?.
>
> Teacher Joan: It is like telling the children that they can't draw so they can just "fill in the gap." That's not being creative and unique. There's no self expression in that. And when one child's artwork is picked out for a reward it doesn't tell you anything about that child's growth in art. He/she might have just been simply lucky. I believe children should always be encouraged to do the best they possibly can do instead of enticing them with reward.

Teacher Joan seemed displeased with some of the school's traditions. She advocated self expression, creativity and unique artworks for children. Her statements agree with Cohen & Gainer (1976) when he notes that "art represents the individual's perception of his [her] world. He [she] perceives, he [she] identifies

his [her] perception, he [she] restates this perception in some objective form, whether it be in paint, clay, film, sound, movement, or words" (p. 58).

The impact of allowing children to participate in "special art" seems to create a different view after the "best" works had been chosen and the children were awarded their prizes. In one of the award winning ceremonies that I observed, everyone that participated in the workshop was rewarded with a coloring book but only a few children received the grand prizes. The idea of announcing the winners involved the whole school and this was done during the general bi-weekly school gathering referred to as assembly. The winners of the fire safety posters were announced and the fireman gave out the prizes. Coloring books were handed over to the teachers for everyone in the classes and the child that made the "best" artworks in each class was called up for a prize.

However, some of the children were not very enthusiastic about doing art after the above episode. Seth, who was sitting beside Solomon, noticed me coming into Teacher Anne's class and the following was heard:

Seth: Oh no, not again. (slapping his hands on his desk)

Solomon: What?

Seth: Look. (pointing to me)

Solomon: Art again?

Seth: I don't wanna do art.

My presence in the class was an indication that it was time for art as was indicated by Solomon and Seth. However the children

were not excited about doing art at this time, "not again" "art again?" "I don't wanna do art". I wondered what had motivated these responses. Teacher Anne who had noticed what happened quickly got the children's attention and tried to intervene.

> Teacher Anne: Listen class. I know that some of you are probably not very happy because your artworks were not chosen as the best works in this class. You need to be pleased enough for the fact that you did your best. That's all that should really matter. Who remembers what I've always told you about winning or not winning?

There was an echo of answers from the class:

> Class: Try, try, try again.

> Teacher Anne (continued): That's right. Never give up but keep on trying to do your very best. You could be the one to get picked next time.

The class seem to be under control at this point as Teacher Anne's act of intervention seem to have calmed the children down. She introduced the lesson on "crayon etching" and I passed out the papers while the children placed their packages of crayon on their desks. However, Sandra who had her head on the table told me that she did not need any paper as I handed one to her. I asked what she was going to use for the project and she responded:

> Sandra : I really don't feel like doing this.

I asked her if she had talked to Teacher Anne about it and she shrugged her shoulders. I called Teacher Anne's attention to the situation and the following conversation was recorded:

> Teacher Anne: What's going on, Sandra?

Sandra: I don't wanna do art anymore.

Teacher Anne: Why not?

Sandra: I'm not good in it.

Teacher Anne: Yes, you are.

Sandra: Well I didn't win the prize. If I was good I would have got the prize.

The teacher sat beside Sandra and talked to her for a little while and when Teacher Anne got up to leave, Sandra burst into tears. Teacher Anne led Sandra to the quiet corner and had her lie on the little couch while Teacher Anne returned to the front of the class. After the other children got busy with the project, Teacher Anne went to talk with Sandra again. Sandra looked calm this time and Teacher Anne walked her back to her desk, gave her a drawing paper and Sandra settled down to her project.

The children's responses toward art seemed to have been changed after their expectations in "special art" were not fulfilled. "I don't wanna do art anymore" "I'm not good in it" ". . . I didn't get the prize." Sandra's perception of her ability in art had been affected negatively because she did not win the prize introduced by the visiting instructor. However, the teacher affirmed her belief in Sandra's ability ("Yes you are"). This affirmation and words of encouragement were often used by teachers to reinforce children's belief in their personal abilities. "Yes you are" apparently expressed Teacher Anne's opinion of Sandra's ability in art to make her realize that the teacher still believed that she (Sandra) was still good in art and was encouraged to keep on doing art.

Interviewing the teachers gave me an insight into how they view the resultant effect of "special art" among their children:

> Teacher Anne: I guess there are pros and cons in this type of activities. I know it's really difficult for some children to accept defeat in competition. I also realize that art is not a very good subject to use for competition since it's really difficult to say one artwork is better than the other. But they just have to learn that competition is part of life and learn to deal with it because sometimes you win and other times you lose.

The example of teacher intervention among the children demonstrated that she observed a problem in the class. Teacher Anne analyzed the children's emotional problem in order to arrive at a practical solution. In this case, she had intervened with the class collectively and also individually. Successful intervention had helped the children to be able to deal with the problem of not wanting to do art again. Although children experience art as a powerful means of expression (Cohen & Gainer, 1976), the above example illustrates that this view may be distorted as competition is introduced in art. The teacher, however, encouraged the children to learn how to deal with their emotions as she told them "not to give up." Thus, the children also understood that there are other things to learn about what is called art within the school as they settled back to "try again" after their teacher's intervention.

As I observed in Teacher Catherine's class (a day later), another incidence was recorded in relation to "special art." The teacher introduced the cut and paste Easter project and told the children to take out their felt markers, scissors and glue. Three other children were noticed sitting by Johnson who had won the

prize for the fire poster from this class. As they got busy with their coloring, more children, including Josephine and Jessy, kept converging on Johnson's desk to look at his picture. Then they returned to their desks to continue their work. Josephine and Jessy who were sitting close together discussed how they wanted their pictures to look like Johnson's.

Josephine: There! (as she finished putting little black spots on the yellow colored chick at the bottom right corner of her paper) So, does it really look like Johnson's?

Jessy: Yeah. Let's go back and see how he made his eggs.

Josephine: O. K. I'm gonna make my whole picture just like his.

Jessy: Me, too.

Teacher Catherine who was going around the class overheard the conversation and, as the children got up, she asked why they had to have the same colors as Johnson. Josephine replied, "Because, he's the best," and Jessy nodded in agreement. "Well, because he won the prize doesn't mean you all have to copy him, do your work the way you like it," continued Teacher Catherine. Jessy replied, "But teacher, I can't make it so good." "You just have to keep trying, practice makes perfect," said the teacher as she moved over to some other children. The above interaction highlights children's newly found understanding of how to achieve "good art" as they accepted the winner of the prize as the "best" and reduced their ability in art to copying his artwork while claiming ". . . I can't make it so good." However, the teacher's comment to the children is also noted as an

act of intervention as she advised " . . keep on trying. . . ." The teacher also attempted to stop the children's act of copying but encouraged individual expression ." . . do your work the way you like it."

These episodes of interaction that took place during and after participating in "special art" reveal the critical representation of the lived-in-world that children and adults (teachers and visiting instructors) find encompassing them. The act of picking out the "best" indicates the taken-for-granted concept that adults have the right to control what children do (Davies, 1980). This act also suggests that the adults' popular conception of what art is for children is the correct one. Reviewing all my field notes related to "special art" made me wonder if the above observations could be related to Lowenfeld & Brittain's (1982) statement "whenever you hear children say, 'I can't draw that', we can be sure that some kind of interference had occurred in their lives" (p. 53). The teachers all regretted that the children's participation in "visitor initiated art" led to undesired behavior, but no comments were made by Teacher Anne or Teacher Catherine against it, instead, they felt that children needed to learn to deal with different situations.

Within this theme, several domains were also seen to have been related together. Some of these include, kinds of instructors, kinds of influence caused by competiton, parts of special school programs and results of intervention. However, since the teachers interacted and taught art in different ways, it was evident that there were some conditions responsible for the different choices

and decisions they made. In trying to understand this diversity, I arrived at the third theme in this study :

Teachers' background:

Teachers' backgrounds affect the decisions they make while interacting with and introducing children to art experiences.

To a lot of people, the art class is seen as a place to learn to draw and paint, and the school is seen as a place to learn to read and write but to the teacher, it is much more. In contrast to the casual impressions of the outsider the teacher's knowledge is very complex. There's a continuous struggle within teachers to gain a balance between good classroom management and the right outcome during art lessons. The class setting also involves varied cultural meaning and teaching styles. This assumption is made as teachers informed me of how they are faced with the task of making decisions and how concerned they are that the decisions not have a negative impact on children. In understanding how they arrive at the decisions they make, teachers' background including training, background experiences and upbringing are strongly reflected.

Since the teaching of art in the elementary school does not often require a specialized art teacher and all teachers have various areas of specialization, teacher training is not usually consistent. The kind of training each teacher has in relation to art does go a long way in affecting the kind of art activities they engage in as well as the kind of interaction that goes on during the art lesson. Teacher Joan's art class engaged in various uncommon types of art such as paper marbling, plaster cast, papier mâché sculptures, mosaic

design, photography, fabric art as well as the history or art. She also taught the children how to respond and criticize artworks (prints) of popular artists as well as their own classworks. An example of this was observed after a painting class. All the children's paintings had been displayed on the chalkboard.

Teacher Joan: Now, look at these different paintings very carefully. I want you to tell me what you see. What do you think the person who made it is trying to show? How do the artworks make you feel as you look at them? Would you say the painting is balanced?

Daniel: I like the bright yellow in Betty's apple and banana. It looks like she's showing that the sun is coming from the right hand side.

Teacher Joan: That's good Daniel. Now I want someone else to tell us how it makes you feel and if you think it's balanced or not?

Dorcas: It's ugly (laughs)

Teacher Joan: Excuse me Dorcas (stands up and speaks in a loud voice). You all need to remember that we're not trying to judge or make jest of anyone's work here. What I'll like to know is how the work affects you.

Dustin: It makes me feel happy because I like bright colors. But the painting is not balanced. I think she could have made it bigger in the middle of her paper.

Teacher Joan: That's a good criticism.

In the above episode, Teacher Joan was seen teaching the children how to develop aesthetic judgment in art ". . . what do you think the person is trying to show?". She taught the children to

relate what they saw to their personal feelings and be able to make constructive judgment about the works ". . . how do the artworks make you feel?", "would you say the painting is balanced?". The children who seem to be responding satisfactorily are also given positive reinforcement as can be deduced from Teacher Joan 's response "that's a good criticism." However, Teacher Joan intervened to stop what she concluded to be a mocking attitude . . . "that's ugly" and reminded the children that was not the purpose of the lesson.

The use of uncommon art materials and the kind of interaction that occurs as children respond to art verbally was only present in Teacher Joan's class. When I inquired why she did this kind of art she noted, "It has to do with my training in art and education. I was exposed to the four major segments in the Art Curriculum Guide and also the different media and techniques areas in art. I've been trained as an artist and so I find it fulfilling to expose children to various forms of art."

The Alberta Elementary Art Curriculum Guide (1985), which is supposedly in use at the school, states the four major components of an art program as including reflection, depiction, composition and expression. Teacher Catherine, however, was not familiar with the guide and she stated,

"I've scanned through the Art Curriculum Guide and I really don't understand it well enough to be able to implement it."

When I asked how the selection of her art lesson was made she said:

> I teach art the way I was taught. I grew up basically coloring during art at school and since I don't have any formal training in art, I really can't do much different. I simply follow the calendar for holiday and seasonal themes. Like in December, we did Christmas and winter stuff and now we're doing spring and Easter things.

I also found out that Teacher Anne, who had taken one course in art education, tried using the Art Curriculum Guide sometimes but stated,

> "I avoid areas like art criticism and history of art because I've personally learned through experience that they are too difficult to implement."

The discussions with the teachers appear to indicate that their training does affect their interaction with children in art as they either implement the curriculum or follow the cultural events on the calendar. However, the teacher's experiences, as indicated by Teacher Anne, also affect the kinds of art experiences that the children are exposed to.

Experience includes all that teachers have to learn as they put the principles of their training to practice within the classroom setting. It also comprises having a good understanding of the children as different individuals and learning to deal with these individual differences. Children are not the same; there are those who are verbal-oriented while others may be body and movement-oriented, and still others may be visual-oriented (Cohen & Gainer 1976). The following episode illustrates interaction in which the teacher uses her experiential knowledge of the individual child in dealing with the situation.

Teacher Anne had given the children some sand which they had to sprinkle onto their (glue-made) outline drawings of imaginary animals of their choice. Samson's paper was still blank as he was seen lying on his desk, dipping his hand into the meat tray which contained the sand, and drawing different things with his fingers. Teacher Anne walked up to him and the following was overheard.

Teacher Anne: Do your work, Samson.

Samson: I don't know what to make.

She pulled out a chair and sat down beside him, and he sat up and looked more serious.

Teacher Anne: It doesn't have to be real. Just use your imagination and think of an animal you've never seen before.

Samson O. K. (He looked up with an eye closed and his face squeezed up as if thinking very deeply) How about a bear with eight legs?.

Teacher Anne: Oh yeah, that's good Samson. Go ahead and draw that.

Samson started drawing his eight legged bear while Teacher Anne went around the class checking on others.

Teacher Anne later stated that it really helps to know the children individually. She continued, "You'll really have to figure out what works for who. You know, for a child like Samson it isn't that he can't do the work but he enjoys a lot of individual attention, and most times all it takes is just to sit by his side for a few minutes. Now, if someone like Samantha does that, I'll be worried because she's just not that kind of person."

The teacher's interaction with Samson was seen as an act of intervention which resulted in a positive action as she sat by him and tried to direct his thoughts. I however find her comment " . . figure out what works for who" interesting as it speculates that children do not seem to operate at the same level and yet have to be taught and interacted with in the same classroom. While I was trying to find out how teachers arrive at these decisions they make concerning the children's individual needs, Teacher Anne noted, "experience does teach you a lot of things that are just not written down and I have to try different things and see what works and what doesn't." I asked the teachers if they are usually satisfied with the kind of choices they make. Teacher Anne responded, "Not always. Sometimes I know that the choices I make may not necessarily be the best choices and I regret making them, but if they work for me, I stick to them."

This remark seems contradictory since I could not understand how a teacher would regret an act and yet continue its practice. However, this action was not peculiar to Teacher Anne's class alone but to all the three teachers.

Teacher Joan indicated her dissatisfaction with herself and some of the choices she made:

> Sometimes, I get stuck while trying to make the right decisions. But since I have to be able to manage my classroom properly, I have to daily work out a way of solving problems within my class. You know it's terrible that I have to hold some children back from the art lesson as a form of punishment which, of course, clashes

> with my personal philosophy of teaching art, but what else could I do?

I asked Teacher Joan why she used this method in managing her class and she responded:

> Because it has helped me, at least to an extent. These days I hardly send students out to the hallway or to the principal's office for misbehaving. I can now, somehow deal with my classrcom problem without being seen as a teacher that lacks good classroom management. So, I've decided to use it when I have no choice.

I realized that teachers seem to be in a dilemma as they try to work out a balance between classroom management and teaching strategy and as a consiquence their reputation in the school. I could deduce from the teachers that they had to be able to keep the children under control within their classrooms as a sign of good classroom management and the method or strategies used did not seem to matter much.

The way the teachers dealt with this issue of choice as they interacted with children is also related to their personal background or experiences. The follcwing episode is an example of my fieldwork journal that elaborates this point.

I had been in the grade one class for about 15 minutes observing asTeacher Anne introduce the art lesson of the day. At 1.15pm, she handed out large butterfly shaped wax paper to the children while I placed the containers of tempera paint on the children's tables. I noticed that there was a different color of paint and a paint brush in each container. Stevie asked, "Teacher, can we start painting?" The teacher said, "Yes." Then Sarah asked, "Can I

use other colors different from this"? (Pointing to the yellow paint on her table). The teacher replied, "Yes Sarah, when you're done with that color, you can trade with someone else, but I want you all to just leave the paint brushes in the paint when you're trading. So, trade both the paint brushes and the paint, o.k? I don't want the colors to get mixed up". Sarah asked, "Why can't we mix the colors, teacher?" The teacher replied, "I told you why already, now do your work." Sarah, who was sitting beside Susan, then whispered something into her ears and they both giggled. Sarah and Susan both painted on the wax paper with their original colors and then switched their colors. They both hung on to their original paint brushes and watched carefully as Sarah dipped her brush into the blue paint passed to her by Susan. Their eyes lit up as they stared at the paint and then at each other. "Neat," said Sarah, and Susan nodded gently. The yellow paint from Sarah's brush had been mixed with some of the blue paint and green color could be seen at one corner of the container. Susan looked a little closer and said, "I'm going to try it, too." She mixed the blue color on her brush with some of the yellow in the container and they both painted on the wax paper with the green color. Teacher Anne walked by their table as she was checking everyone's work. The two girls looked scared as the teacher noticed that the paint had been mixed up. In a loud voice, she (Teacher Anne) asked, "Didn't I tell you not to mix the colors?" "We just wanted to see what color it would change to," answered Sarah. "That's not what I asked, Sarah. Now both of you, get up and go to the back of the class," snapped Teacher Anne. "Susan you sit right there (pointing to the book corner) and Sarah you sit over there

(pointing to the manipulative corner)." The girls got up and Susan said in a sober voice, "We were just trying it out, teacher." Teacher Anne replied, "I really do not need any explanations right now. You girls didn't listen and I'll like you to know that you need to listen, so, please, move over to the chairs" (Time-out). The girls moved to the chairs quietly and slowly and sat there until the art lesson was over.

In analyzing the episode above, I asked the following questions. Why was it that Teacher Anne did not want the children to mix the colors? Was there any particular reason why no water was provided to wash off the paint from the brushes? Did Teacher Anne notice that the children were discovering the idea of being able to get green color by mixing their yellow and blue colors? Did Teacher Anne see her interaction with the two girls as interfering with their discovery in art?

I had an informal interview with Teacher Anne and she looked upset as we talked about the lesson:

Teacher Anne: You know the kids really make me angry sometimes. I expect them to follow simple instructions. They really try out my patience some days.

Researcher: I remember that you told them not to mix the colors.

Teacher Anne: Well, I didn't want them to mix the colors and that's why I purposely didn't give them water to wash their brushes. I just wanted them to pass the paint and brushes around the class. Again, experience has taught me that you can be sure that there would be a lot of spills whenever you have little water containers all around the class.

You know, we did a lesson on color mixing sometime ago but I basically did all the mixing while the kids watched.

Researcher: Why did you do the mixing of the colors alone?

Teacher Anne: Well, we were running short of time that day so I couldn't fit them in and we haven't been able to get around it again since that time.

Researcher: Why do you think that the girls mixed the colors?

Teacher Anne: (Took a deep breath and there was a long pause) You know, somewhere at the back of my mind, I know they were just probably curious and wanted to see if it will work for them too. I mean, children are very curious and I kind of feel guilty for not letting them. Oh well, they have to learn to listen anyway. If I let them get away with that, the rest of the class will go ahead and copy them and I will loose control of the class (pause). On the other hand, I could have let them but if every one went ahead and copied them, then my whole lesson would have changed from design with colors to color mixing.

Researcher: Is that a great concern?

Teacher Anne: Well, when I plan to teach a lesson, I try as much as possible to go by my plan. I really don't want the children dictating to me what I'm supposed to be teaching. That's my job. But you know, teaching is a difficult job. While I'm busy teaching the children how to listen, I'm also making a mistake of not allowing them to experiment.

Researcher: So, how did you feel about that?

Teacher Anne: (Looking really serious) That's a difficult question. Because for a minute, I felt like I was in control of the class but, I guess I should actually say that I really feel kind of guilty too. You know, for putting an end to their discovery or whatever. I battle with this all the time.

Anyway, I just tell myself that teaching obedience, is part of my job and probably a more important one than discovery.

Researcher: How did you come to that conclusion?

Teacher Anne: Well, that's how I was raised. You don't do your own thing. You listen and obey the teacher. The teacher is in charge.

I was able to discover that she was worried about having the colors all mixed up and spills of water around the class. However, she did not seem to consider the different pace at which the children were working and realize that they might not all be ready to switch colors and brushes at the same time. She also was not ready to allow any form of experimentation, but instead, she saw the attempt to experiment as disobedience. It seems that having the children "listen" was of greater importance to Teacher Anne, and this she related to her upbringing. It seems that Teacher Anne feels that she has to be in control of her class at all times and she does not like to deviate from her original lesson plan. She seems to treat suggestions of deviation as distractions to her lesson and she tags it disobedience. On the other hand, she seems to be faced with the dilemma of interfering, as she noted ". . . I'm also making a mistake. . . ". Teacher Anne seems to relate teaching and the interaction she has with her children now to the way she was brought up and how she interacted with her own teachers. I wonder if the children would have "listened" if they had been allowed to experiment in mixing. If these acts of disobedience suggest to the teacher that something is needed, I wonder if she ever gives it more thought. I

also wonder if their background experiences always have a relation to the decisions they make and if teachers strive to avoid making decisions that are interference related.

I later found out that a "feeling of guilt" is common among these teachers. Teacher Joan told me that even though she knew the right thing to do, circumstances seemed to force her into making other choices sometimes. "And, of course, I regret making those choices" she continued. Also, in Teacher Catherine's class, I had observed a similar incidence as the children colored, cut and glued already drawn flowers to their cut-out baskets. James drew a couple of his own flowers. He colored, cut and glued them to his basket while Teacher Catherine came along and told him that he was not following the instructions. James replied by saying, "I just want to draw my own flowers." Teacher Catherine said, "Those are not really looking very nice James take them off" James insisted on leaving his flowers on the basket and Teacher Catherine took his paper away, gave him a new one and told him to start again. James looked upset as he frowned his face and put his head on his table for about a minute. After the lesson, Teacher Catherine, said "I kind of feel guilty now because I didn't let him (James) do what he wanted. But that's the way I was taught." However, living with the regrets and inner struggles against their personal philosophies is something the teachers deal with daily as they interact with children and other members of the school. Teacher Joan stated, "I hate making choices that I don't personally agree with, but I've been frustrated to the point where I have to learn to live with it for now, I guess."

Decision making often involves a lot of contradictory actions as teachers try to strike a balance between theory and practice. Even when teachers theoretically know that an action is good or bad, they still have to work out a balance as to what is convenient for different situations. It seems that the school passes along some popular cultural routines as traditional and sanctioned ways of managing the classrooms and these tend to dictate the standard way of dealing with specific classroom problems. Each teacher tended to pick out what seemed to work best for her depending on the situation and what is generally acceptable within the cultural setting. The teachers often claimed that they had justifiable reasons for the decisions they made. Schutz (1964) says that it is in retrospect that a person decides among choices that justify action. Schutz (1964) and Spradley and McCurdy (1975) further note that people are continually inventing, manipulating, or justifying their reasons for bringing their actions and interactions in line with a common-sense understanding of the rules in order to make sense of their social situations.

As stated in the responses above, teachers often blamed the school for the quality of interaction that went on in their classrooms. This leads to the next theme stated below.

Availability of resources:

The availability of resources affect the art experience children are exposed to in the classroom.

"Resources" in this context refer to both materials used for art as well as human help. The school was the major provider of

resources although the teachers also provided resources on their own whenever possible. There was a storage room for art supplies which was equipped with various art materials including poster colors, paper, clay, pastels, plaster of Paris, paint brushes, ceramic molds, crayons, tissue paper, and crape paper. However, the teachers also stored some art supplies in their different classrooms and collected different recyclable/junk materials which included tubes of toilet paper and paper towel, scraps of fabric, strips of reflective or colored paper, meat trays, milk cartons and old toothbrushes. Whenever the teachers needed materials that were not available in the school, they put up signs in the staff room or/and inquired by word of mouth if any staff member could help. An example of this was noted as Teacher Joan put up a sign asking members of the staff to inquire of their dentists if they (the teachers) could have the old dental instruments which she and her class could use in carving plaster or for clay works.

At other times, the teachers requested materials from the school principal who in turn promised to get them or turned down the request depending on how popular the use of the material was or if it fit within the school budget at the time of request. An example of this was also recorded as Teacher Joan told me that she had requested that more clay be ordered and was told to first find out if other teachers were interested in doing clay projects and also find out the cost before the school decided to order it. Since it was getting close to the end of the school year, the school authority was reluctant to spend more morey on materials that were not in popular demand.

The school seemed to have a very supportive atmosphere as staff members often assisted each other in providing materials needed for art generally. They frequently shared ideas especially about monthly themes or special events on the calendar. A lot of the ideas shared usually involved the use of stereotype art. "Stereotype art" is described as any form of art that involves following specific cut and paste patterns and/or coloring already drawn pictures that had been mechanically reproduced. An example of the use of stereotype art was noted as one of the staff members had brought a photocopy picture from a pizza store to be used for a coloring contest. A hundred dollars was to be awarded to the first place winner of the contest while other runner up winners were to have other prizes such as a pizza party. Many of the teachers including Teacher Anne and Teacher Catherine liked the idea and made copies of the photocopy picture for their classes to use during their art lessons. Similar art classes involving the use of stereotype art materials were basically taught by Teacher Catherine while Teacher Anne used them quite often too. As stated earlier, Teacher Joan was very much against using stereotype art and tried to discourage it's use by other teachers. However, she blamed the school for encouraging it's use as she stated, "Every teacher was given at least one big binder at the beginning of the school year with pictures that could be photocopied for various times of the year. The pictures were collected from teachers in previous years and put together as examples for all teachers to share." She continued by saying, "And you know, color-in papers are used for almost every subject in the school." Teacher Catherine also noted, "I grew up coloring

photocopy drawings in school. That was really the only kind of art that I knew how to do. So, I guess it is natural to say that I find it very convenient to use." Teacher Anne said, "I store all the pictures that go with different topics in separate folders and just pull them out when the seasons come up. That way, I find them very handy." From the above statements, and other observations made in the school, I could see that the tradition of having stereotype art in the school is revealed as being passed from generation to generation. Teacher Catherine (and other teachers) who do not have the training in art and are forced into teaching art rely on stereotype art either from her binder, her background or from other members of staff.

The attitude of teachers toward stereotype art and its effect on children is very difficult to analyze. Teacher Joan stated, "I believe that children should not be made to color drawings that have been made by other people." But Teacher Catherine stated, "I find them to be a lot neater and easier than having the children do it all by themselves. I also think that they're easy to manipulate by children." However, even after Teacher Catherine noted that she might have disturbed her children's self expression, she continued using them. Teacher Anne also noted, "Although I know that it can restrict the children's art ability, I really find them very handy for when I run out of ideas."

I could see at this point that teachers continued using stereotype art materials, but blamed the school for providing some kinds of resources and not providing others. For example, Teacher Catherine stated, "If there was a teacher in-service based on art, it probably would have helped people like me." Again she stressed that

if the school had a full time art teacher she would not have had to teach art at all. Teacher Anne had also complained about not having an equipped art room as well as a good library for teacher resources. Teacher Joan complained about not having enough materials for art and how that seems to restrict her art activities in the class. However, her greatest concern was the lack of extra staff members to take her child/children whenever they turned disruptive in class. She blamed the school for not providing her with extra help, thereby she had to use the art lesson as a form of motivation or punishment in order to be able to manage her classroom properly as well as retain a good reputation within the school. The example below states this point:

While Teacher Joan's class was doing a clay project, the children were observed sitting around their desks in little groups of twos and threes. But Darren was by himself sitting on a chair with his math book on his desk at a corner in the class. Teacher Joan stated, "He was fooling around during the math lesson and I had threatened him about missing the art lesson, (which he loved very much) if he didn't listen. Well, he blew it, so he has to sit in the corner and do his math now." Teacher Joan continued by stating, "The principal is not very happy about the high frequency at which my children are being sent to the office, so I have to learn to solve my classroom problems by myself. I know this is terrible, but I've resolved into using the art lesson."

The act of using the art lesson as a form of punishment or reward was common to all the teachers. Since most of the children seemed to enjoy taking part in art activities, all three teachers used

the activity as a privilege as they allowed the "listening" children to take part in it while those who were "not listening" were not allowed to take part. Other examples of this was noted as I overheard Teacher Anne saying, "Sally, you know you won't be allowed to do art. Please take your social studies book and move to the back of the class." Teacher Catherine on the other hand had sent Jamie out to sit in the hallway. She said, "She's (Jamie) just off the wall. I warned her twice and told her that she won't be allowed to do art if she didn't stop being so rude." After these observations had been made, the teachers told me that they just have to take privileges away from the children sometimes to make them learn to listen. When I asked if the art lesson was a privilege, the following responses were given:

> Not really, it's just one of the other subjects. But somehow, because all the children like doing art, i sometimes use it as a privilege. Even though I don't go into a lot of complicated stuff, the children don't want to miss art--(Teacher Catherine)

> The children love art. If you'll let them, they'll do art all day. So it really works to use art as a form of punishment--(Teacher Anne)

> I don't think art should be a privilege, but when the school doesn't seem to help out, you'll have to work out a way of helping yourself. And since I know that they all enjoy doing art, if they don't listen, then they won't be allowed to participate in the art lesson--(Teacher Joan)

When I asked the teachers what would have been done if the necessary resources were available, their responses were as follows:

> I could have probably had better ideas on how to teach art and would have felt more confident or I would not have had to teach art at all--(Teacher Catherine).
>
> I would have probably been more free to allow more time for painting and other messy types of art if I knew we were doing them in an art room and not in my class. I would have also been more relaxed with having the children experiment more in the art class. Maybe I could have gained a lot more insight on how to teach art better if the resources were available--(Teacher Anne).
>
> If the school had been more sensitive to the children's needs as well as mine, I would have had more choices and won't be forced to compromise with disturbing teaching strategies. We could have also tried a lot more if materials were readily available. For instance, I couldn't do printing at all because there were no brayers or even printing ink and the school is not ready to buy them now---(Teacher Joan).

Since teaching does not take place in a vacuum but in the environment of the school, it became apparent that the culture of the school played a vital role in what goes on in the classrooms. Teachers often resolve the problem of unavailability of resources by making choices that are not to the children's advantage and are also disturbing to the teachers themselves. While developing this theme on resources, I noticed that the teachers tend to work out a way of making their classes more conducive to learning art despite the inconveniences.

Another important factor affecting the type of interaction that goes on in the classroom is dictated by parental influence among the children. This leads to the last theme in this study which is stated below.

Parental response:

Parental response to children's art affects the quality of the child's art experiences.

Parents too are included in determining the quality of art experiences that the children have. As they either reject children's works by throwing them out or as they get involved in the classroom activities, children's art experiences in class are affected.

In connection with the interaction that children have with parents, the following incident was recorded in my journal after one of my visits to Teacher Joan's class. Teacher Joan often gave out completed art projects and papers to the children to take home on Fridays. And since this was a Friday, it was not unusual. The art lesson had just been completed and they were cleaning up the bits of plaster of Paris left over from a lesson on sculpting animals from blocks of plaster of Paris. The teacher put together all the art papers for the week while I helped to sort them out according to the names. She called the children one by one to collect their art papers and take them home. But as she called Doris, the following was observed:

Teacher: Here you go Doris (handing the papers over to her).

Doris: (Shaking her head) No teacher, save them here. Can't take them home.

Teacher: What do you mean Doris?

Doris: My mom will throw them in the garbage (Looking very sad).

Teacher: She will?

Doris: Hum Hum.

Teacher: Well, you tell her that your teacher said to decorate the house with them.

Doris: She won't listen to me. They'll all go in the garbage.

Teacher: Well, Doris, you take this home and tell her first, then I'll try to talk to her later.

Doris took the papers very reluctantly and walked away slowly with her head bent low.

After the bell rang and the children had all gone, the teacher walked up to me as we were both finishing up with cleaning the classroom and said, "Isn't that awful for that little Doris? You know, she's really good in art. Her imaginative compositions are full of all wonderful expressions. She's really proud of her artworks, too, but I guess if her mom is going to keep throwing them away, she'd rather have them here in class."

I asked Teacher Joan how rampant this type of occurrence is in her class and she explained that there are many parents who do not know the value of their children's artworks. She further explained that since her (Teacher Joan's) children are particularly known for "not listening," it is not uncommon to see things like that happening.

From what I heard from Teacher Joan, it seems to me that her class had already been labeled a class of "not listening" children and I wonder if this therefore meant that it would take a special effort by anyone, including the parents, to recognize the "good" in these children's artworks? I later noticed that having children's artworks thrown away was not indicative of Teacher Joan's class alone.

A similar occurrence had taken place a week later in the grade one class where I had observed Stanford as he put his head on

the table. Teacher Anne said, "Stanford this is no rest time. Sit up and do your work." "Do I have to?" Asked Stanford. "Don't ask me a silly question!" Snapped Teacher Anne. "Well, my mom's gonna throw it out anyway. She said there are too many papers in the house," continued Stanford.

After this episode, I realized that parents or guardians within this setting play a vital role in affecting their children's art activities. A lot of times, conscious actions (throwing papers out) are made for particular reasons, (cleaning up) but the same actions might affect children negatively as in Stanford's case. The two incidents above seem to project that a child's attitude towards future art projects might be shaped by the previous incident of having his/her product rejected. I wonder if Stanford's mom realized that her action was affecting her son's artistic development. I also wonder what the role of the teacher is in these circumstances. When I asked Teacher Joan what she does about situations that involve parents, she said, "If these things happen outside the class, what I usually do is to make an effort to speak to their parents about it. When parents get involved in the classroom, I enjoy it better because it helps me to be able to understand the children a lot more." When I asked her to explicate on that, she narrated the following example:

> Teacher Joan: Let me take Dale for an example. She never used to draw any human figures. The other day we were making drawings of what we enjoy doing with our friends. She told me she loves skipping and playing dolls with her friends and I said okay, draw it. She drew the skipping ropes, her house, the dolls and a few other things without any human

> figure. When I asked her where she and her friend were in her drawing, she said they had gone to get some snacks for their babies. After I had noted this avoidance of human figures in her drawings for sometime, I called her mom to see if she had any explanations for this behavior. Well, she told me what had happened to Dale the year before. She said Dale used to draw human figures but her four brothers used to make a lot of fun of her human figures each time she brought them home. So, she just stopped drawing them.

In the above episode, the teacher could understand Dale better because the mom gave her some background information which became useful in the way she (Teacher Joan) interacted with Dale in class. Teacher Joan saw herself intervening in an issue that she did not understand and she commented on being able to help Dale since she (Dale) started drawing human figures again. Dale's mom also stopped the brothers from making fun of her pictures and started coming to class once in a while to help out. All the teachers in this study state that they sometimes phoned the parents to collect some information about the children and found it useful, especially when there were actions or information that they were not clear about, and this has helped in the way they interacted with the children. The teachers also stress that they have really enjoyed having parents come into the classrooms to help out. Teacher Anne noted that, "It helps a great deal in regards to clearing up issues that I am confused or unsure of." Teacher Catherine also stated that she had more problems with the children whose parents never come into class or cannot be easily reached by phone.

I, however, could not interpret the parents' focus since they were not specifically included in this study.

Since this study was only carried out for three months, I could not determine the length of time that interfering and intervening conditions continue among children within the school setting. However, from what I observed and was told by the teachers, I could deduce that activities that occured within this setting are considered the best ways teachers could have achieved the learning of art within the classroom considering their constraints.

Chapter Summary

The interaction that takes place in the everyday taken-for-granted classroom occurrences were brought into question in order to discover acts of interference and intervention as interpreted by the participants in this social situation. The participants in the art classroom actively and simultaneously created a setting which involved verbal and nonverbal actions in which not only did they express themselves but they did so within the parameters of socially acceptable standards of behavior.

In order to generate appropriate behavior, the participants of the classroom had to make sense of the ongoing actions and interactions. The teachers constructed meaning through interpretations of their situations which was strongly affected by their background, the available resources, other members of the social setting, as well as the cultural traditions of the social setting itself. All these gave meaning to the way art was perceived in the context of the classroom as the effect of intervention and interference on children were analyzed.

As art educators and researchers, we cannot dismiss the effect of the teachers' interactions with children nor can we ignore the factors that are responsible for decisions made in the art classroom if we are to discover more about how children (who in turn will become adults) construct meaning and develop their abilities in art. In order to do this, we must go beyond the explicit knowledge of art education as explained by theoretical stages of artistic development, (Golomb, 1974; Kellogg, 1969; Lowenfeld & Brittain, 1982; Lubin & Poulsen, 1978). These theories explain that all children pass through stages as they develop the ability to represent accurately. We must also go beyond the explicit knowledge of art as explained in the Art Curriculum Guide which outlines specific objectives to be achieved within the art program. These guides and theoretical stages do not describe the whole situation since it is from the interpretations of teachers' experiences while interacting with other members of their social setting that they acquire cultural knowledge and teach children to develop artistic abilities with which these children in turn construct meanings. Within this interaction, the culturally approved behaviors which are implicit form a major source of interference in children's art. In order for children to create art, they have to be able to make sense of the interaction that goes on within the context of their different experiences, which is then transferred to interpret their stock of knowledge.

As stated in the five themes discussed in this chapter, tacit rules were present within the school and seem to have affected classroom interactions to a great extent. The acceptance of tacit

influence on acquired knowledge is reaffirmed by Wilson (1977) who observes that teachers' bahavior and students' learning are never precisely those mandated in the curriculum because schools utilize a tacit curriculum which presents a set of unstated expectations and rules defining school as a cultural system teaching contextual meanings. Teachers, therefore find themselves adhering to these tacit rules before and even after interference in childrens' art become explicit. For example, solving classroom management problems (which is tacit), seem to take importance over art as teachers made decisions using the art activity as a form of reward or punishment. (p. 85-86). Therefore, this decision seems to solve one problem, but creates another.

Again, I noticed that interference-related activities occured at different stages within the art making process. Visiting the three different classes, hearing comments from parents/guardians, and also being present when visiting instructors taught art lessons, it is clearly seen that interference-related activities were very evident regardless of the state of the art--even when the art work was completely finished (as in the case with Doris, p. 88-89).

The way the children responded to acts of interference really varied a lot. Sometimes, they very much welcomed interference, and it produced really good feelings, especially if it was interpreted as "help" related. But at the other times, interference was unwelcome and got the children upset (as in the case with James, p. 80). Again, a child who had accepted "help" one day may turn around the next day and profusely refuse to be helped. Therefore, teachers often told me that they just used their judgment and initiative to do the best

they could depending on the circumstances and the child or children, even if it was not going to be helpful for very long.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, IMPLICATIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The overall summary of this study is presented in this final chapter. This includes the general implications of the findings and recommendations for further study.

Summary Of The Study

The purpose of this study was to analyze the kind of interaction that goes on between teachers and children in the art classroom. This study set out to investigate and describe teachers' perceptions of intervening conditions with a view of differentiating conditions of interference from intervention. Efforts were made to analyze and describe the kinds of interaction between children and teachers in the classroom. Since Lowenfeld notes that as adults (teachers and parents inclusive) attempt to structure the environment of children to provide for what is considered a "meaningful experience," they may consciously or unconsciously be interfering in children's natural art development (see Lowenfeld, 1970). The teachers were used as the main instruments for identifying these acts of interference and I had to rely basically on what they considered to be interference related. The general word "interference" was avoided during interviews but was derived from statements of guilt, mistakes and dissatisfaction that the teachers had specifically referred to during their interactions with their children. Information gathered was therefore recorded according to the accounts given by these teachers. The teachers were allowed to

read over these recorded statements to verify if their statements had been interpreted correctly.

While focusing on the teachers' interpretation of their interaction in the art classroom, I attempted to answer the following questions:

(a) What are the concerns of teachers of art with respect to interference or negative consequences of their interactions with their children?

(b) What classroom conditions or situations do teachers of art consider to be intervention/interference?

(c) What are the implications of intervention and interference for the teaching and learning of art as described by teachers?

It was apparently not an easy task to discover what the concerns of teachers of art are, with respect to interference as they interacted with their students. Each teacher brought to the social situation a unique set of experiences and understanding which was displayed within their classroom interaction and in what they told me.

The different concerns of teachers resulted in the five themes which were discussed extensively in chapter four. These themes also explain how interference is related to teachers' understanding of schooling in general as exemplified by their accounts of school conditions as well as art education.

Teachers' description of intervention/interference within the classroom is very much related to their concept of what art lessons should comprise of and how art should be taught. However, there seems to be a gap in the teaching of art within the elementary

school as compared to what is stated by art educators. For example, Chapman (1978) stated that "children's art experiences in school should be personally meaningful, authentic as art and relevant to life" (p. 118). Feldman (1970) also identifies the task of art education as that of "uniting art and life--at least in the subculture of the school" (p. 137). Wnen the teaching and learning of art is reduced to a set of coloring-in activities, recognizing and copying the "best," cutting and pasting following specified instructions given by teachers, then the above does not seem to guarantee personal relevance to individual life but to a routine program of action.

Cohen & Gainer (1976) state that "if teachers recognize children's art as a powerful means of experimenting with ideas and expressing feelings, they can help to keep these valuable channels for learning open" (p. 42). This is, however, difficult to achieve for a teacher who is not trained in the subject matter but still has to teach the subject. In addition, my data reveal that since teachers operate within the parameters of the school setting, they cannot be singled out and expected to keep the "valuable channels for learning open." Galbraith (1990) states that "the culture of the school has a persuasive influence over teachers" (p. 54). She further states that "teachers are not just expected to teach art, they are also asked to teach within the prescribed instructional and curricular mandates of schools themselves" (p. 55). Some of the things identified within the school are school support, school control, and school administration. These three interact together to make the school

run smoothly and help teachers to carry out their jobs in and around the classrooms.

Teachers' understanding, interpretation, and application of the prescribed curriculum are influenced by the whole school setting. However, the teachers' knowledge and interpretation of the curriculum were not always circumscribed by rules pertaining to the general interaction within the classroom setting. In order to be considered a hardworking and competent teacher, the teacher must acquire the commonsense knowledge necessary to recognize and comply with unwritten rules and expectations within the school setting. The teachers had to conduct their behaviors in ways that made sense if they expected to be socially accepted by others within the school. This informal process contributed to their stock of knowledge in that there were rules to follow which for the most part were tacit, that is, the rules were known outside conscious awareness (Spradley & McCurdy, 1975). These tacit rules within the classroom and school could be referred to as the hidden curriculum.

Phillip Jackson (1968) coined out the term "hidden curriculum" as he discussed how classroom structure and its demands on teachers affect students expectations and therefore shape the context in which they learn. For example, the tacit rule which demands that teachers stage exhibitions within the school affects the kinds of interactions they have with children which may lead to interference in children's art. Interference is, therefore, seen as an unintended learning outcome which results from the educational setting and is caused by adhering to the hidden

curriculum whose phenomenon tends to provide a way of guiding the effects of education.

Gordon's (1982) definition of the hidden curriculum tends to subtly enhance its nature by stating the concept as;

> . . . the school's hidden curriculum is made up of the potential learning outcomes that derive from two different sources: (a) the secondary consequences of the school staff's action and (b) the school's physical environment.

Relating Gordon's definition to this study, for example, the school's environment is beautified by exhibiting childrens' art works on the wall or boards around the school. However, the secondary consequence of the tacit rule to do exhibition may constitute an interfering condition in the classroom and in the teaching of art in general. Also, the influence of the factors related to schooling such as in the case of classroom management is another example of interference.

Kirk (1988) notes that the hidden curriculum becomes concealed due to its secondary nature in relation to the primary function of the other curricula. However, the teacher is responsible for recognizing the hidden curricula and responding to its negative effects through the manipulation of those accessible elements of the functional curriculum of an educational setting. Teachers within this setting seem to recognize and identify the effects of the hidden curriculum as it caused interference within their interactions with children. They attempted to typify the happenings in the art classroom and school as a way of dealing with their lived-in- world. They explained that they did the best they could given the circumstances.

Implications

Interference within childrens' art development in the school appears to be associated with two related implications:

(1) Implications for teachers and teacher education and inservice and

(2)Implications for artistic growth in childhood.

Within the art classrooms, it seems to have been taken for granted that teacher-children interactions were an essential form of communication (Rosario, 1977). However, teachers' actions while interacting within the setting appears to be associated with the hidden curriculum. Most of these actions, according to Schutz are at a commonsense level. It seems to suggest that action over time becomes routine and its significance is rarely brought to question. Teachers are constantly faced with having to make decisions. The decisions they arrive at tend to be related to their background, training, interests, and experiences which, in turn, have a relation to their individual perceptions of art generally as it fits within the school setting. Goodlad (1983) has condemned the influence that teachers' schooling experiences have on their teaching practices--that is, teachers teaching as they were taught. However, in referring to teachers' experience, Clark and Yinger (1977) noted that "because much of the judgment and decision-making that teachers exercise follows from their interpretation of their experience, it is important to study how teachers make sense of their world" (p. 295). The problem of interference in children's and adult's art could therefore be traced to childhood experiences of interactions with teachers of art. I found out that even though these teachers believe

that they are interfering in children's art development, they often tend to blame their actions on other things or people. In this respect, Lotie (1975) notes that teachers have to be socialized to behave independently, and so assume responsibility for their own classroom practices.

In a generation where art is used for decorative, expressive, professional, functional, academic, and recreational purposes, interference in children's art may develop some psychological effects on children, thus creating some form of handicap or hatred for art. It is therefore not surprising to see teenagers or adults who have completely lost interest in art and art-related activities. Childhood experiences with art and the way it is taught may have useful explanations about adults' belief of their art abilities, art appreciation, art education and the way they perceive art in general. Beyer (1986) states that, "with the nearly obsessive concerns of the back to basics movements in the last decade or so, the arts came to be perceived by many as an educational frill, to be curtailed or eliminated altogether in times of fiscal uncertainty" (p. 88). I wonder if the childhood experiences of those who make such decisions were distorted with various forms of interference that were in no way allowing for self expression. On the other hand, we see some people who like and admire art but do not believe that they have any abilities in art that can be developed because those abilities were not recognized and guided by the adults they had interacted with when they were younger. Others might always have the ready answer "I can't" because they always depended on

teachers, parents and other children to do their artworks for them when they were younger.

I have discovered that children tend to enjoy exploring different materials as they did art, but often had to be restricted as the teachers usually outlined specific activities they were expected to get involved in while using their materials. It is difficult to know to what creative extent the children could have performed if all these restrictions were not outlined as the teachers taught their lessons. However, since children are taught to place more emphasis on listening and obeying simple instructions and are consequently being punished or rewarded for complying or not complying, it is difficult to determine what could have been achieved otherwise. Since teachers' understanding of classroom management and general interactions which lead to interference are affected by the tacit rules which are present within the school, it is also difficult to know what the effects of these forms of interference are on the children.

In the larger society, we sometimes see people who find copying of other people's artworks a lot easier than trying to be original and creative. This act of copying sometimes does not end with art but could extend to copying others' general lifestyles. They find it problematic to make up their minds about things and, decision making could be a big problem. Such people are often seen looking for the approval of others who they consider to be generally better than they are. They therefore develop a wrong perception about their abilities and individualities and sometimes wish they were others. These actions could be related to their childhood experiences of art

whereby they resolved into copying the "best" artworks in the class as picked out by the teacher or other adults. Linderman (1990) states that "we are born unique individuals, but we learn to be copiers and imitators" (p. 8).

In summary, it is difficult to know if interference in the school can be completely eliminated. However, we need to understand the complexities of the teaching of art within the school setting as the hidden curriculum plays a vital role in what goes on in the classroom. If we want to produce professionals, creative, reflective, and unique individuals, an approach is needed to bring into the open, the tacit rules that lead to negative unexpected outcomes. This study is in agreement with the findings of Cornbleth (1984), Doyle (1984), and McKay (1971) who noted that a teacher's way of making sense of a classroom situation can either support or contradict the manifest curriculum depending upon perceived circumstances. Yinger (1980) also states that there are factors in the school setting that strongly influence the outcome of instructional practice. Therefore, if teacher-children interaction in the art class is to be more productive, a change is necessary. This change should lead to a reduction of interference and thereby result in a more effective art education program.

Recommendations

This study reveals that classroom interaction is important to the teaching and learning of art in the elementary school. However, the teacher has to adhere to the tacit rules within the school while interacting and teaching art. This interaction may lead to

interference which negatively affect children and their perceptions of art. Further to this, the research findings reported in this present study agree with the work of Brophy (1982), Emmer, Evertson, and Anderson (1980), Johnson and Brooks (1979), and Yinger (1980) that the outcome of institutional practice is strongly influenced by the factors in the school setting. If it is important then that children develop their abilities in art with minimum interference,and if teachers are to ensure that children experience a productive art education program, then a change is inevitable. Neilsen (1990) states that "we live through our beliefs and we grow through change". Therefore, if growth and development are expected, change should be urged in several ways.

School administrators should be made aware of the implications of interference that could occur as a result of the hidden curriculum. This awareness could lead to questioning, searching and making explcit the effects of school traditions, believes and culture which tend to cause interference.

Schools should also ensure that only teachers who are trained and interested in art should be encouraged to teach art in the elementary schools. Since most elementary school teachers are often generalists, they should be given the choice of switching classes so that they can teach only the subjects with which they are most comfortable. Alternatively, art related inservice programs should be arranged for all teachers of art.

The school should endeavor to provide enough resources for the teachers to be able to maintain good learning conditions and thereby minimize interference.

Teachers of art should develop the tendency to question themselves, their biases, opinions, and perceptions of art as they reflect on their lessons. They must inquire into the problematic nature of teaching art and develop thoughtful and meaningful approaches to art education in the classroom, not merely instant remedies or panaceas. By so doing, they may become agents in breaking down the social forces of the school and bringing a change that can help in reducing implicit actions that cause interference within the school setting. Teachers should pay particular attention to children and the questions they ask in order to find out what their motives are. They should be more tolerant of children who tend to deviate from the classroom norm. Instead of punishing them for not "obeying," teachers should try to find out why they deviate and give them chances to sometimes follow through. In this same light, the American Psychological Association (1981) states that "conditions of obedience may be enabling and educative and refer to acts of charity and kindness, as well as to destruction" (p. 40). This, therefore, supports the implication that acts of obedience do not necessarily lead to positive ends. This negative aspect, which has been referred to as interference in this study, has been revealed as being prevalent in the art classroom in different forms. In an attempt to change, deter, facilitate, or enhance conditions for teaching, it appears that teachers of art must be very flexible and conscious of individual differences. It appears that children would benefit individually if they have the opportunity to ask questions in order to clarify what they are asked to do, when they can relate their personal experiences, and when they can choose from among

several activities and tasks. Conversely, conditions leading to interference are likely to be present where teachers are rigid, unaware of individual differences, and where children have less opportunity to express themselves freely.

Art educators involved in teacher training should be informed about the gap between the theory and the practice of the teaching and learning of art such as those reported in this study. This information could lead to a critical awareness of the daily classroom practices of the teachers of art which have become a taken-for-granted way of life within the structure of the school. Awareness of the implications of interference related actions and interactions would help art educators rethink the validity of the relationship between art education principles and the professional practices their trainees are prepared for.

Educational administrators who are in charge of the organization and management of schools should be informed of the nature of the presence of interference as it has been made evident in the findings of this study, and how it has been embedded within the hidden curriculum in the school and thereby contradicting what ought to be within the school environment.

Parental involvement in the school should also be enhanced. Parents should be encouraged to participate more in their children's education at school. This involvement might be able to bridge some of the gaps between teachers and children and, hopefully, help to minimize interference-related activities.

Finally, Jackson (1992) states that, "if we want to know how schools and teachers are really affecting our students, this view

tells us, we must learn to look with a keen eye at the minutiae of classroom life". (p. 90) Teachers, art educators and school administrators therefore must work together, be sensitive to the interfering conditions within the school structure and agree to have a shared responsibility for the education experience. This responsibility will attempt to have elements of continuous searching and implement elements of change within the structure of the school and the teaching of art education

Emerging Questions and Suggestions for Future Research

Do people realize that the way they interact with others generally could affect those interacted with negatively or positively? Do teachers of art realize that the way they interact with their students while teaching could cause interference that might turn out to be a long-term effect on the students? Efland (1985) states that both Lowenfeld and Read "tended to regard the decline of artistic expression that occurs at adolescence as the result of corrupting social forces such as coloring and comic books or stereotype art activities in the classroom" (p. 114). To what extent are parents concerned with the kinds of background their children's teachers have? And what impact do parents themselves make as their children develop their artistic abilities? I do not have data from the children's homes to see if the children do art at home. If they do, I wonder how home art compares with school art. And I also wonder how parent-caused interference can be compared to teacher-caused interference. I think further studies are required in this area. I also do not have enough data to compare the kinds of art

done and the perceptions of the children to art since I was focusing mainly on the teachers in this study. However, it would be informative to find out what the perceptions of the children to art are as compared to that of their (children's) individual teachers.

Another area of further research would be to study the same group of children for a number of years as they move along in the academic ladder to see if their perceptions of art change as they get older and come in contact with various kinds of teachers with different backgrounds and experiences of art. Since this study was carried out during a short period of time, I do not know what the answers to these questions would be, but further studies in this area might be able to shed more light on them.

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APPENDIX A

Taxonomic Diagram I

Kinds of Art

(1) Drawing

- (i) with pencil
- (ii) with pastel
- (iii) with crayons
- (iv) using tracers.

(2) Painting

- (i) with poster color
- (ii) with arcrylic paint

(3) Coloring

- (i) with pastels
- (ii) with crayons
- (iii) with felt markers
- (iv) with pencil.

(4) Etching

- (i) with wax crayon

(5) Paper Marbelling

- (i) with arcrylic paint

(6) Sculpture

(i) with clay

(ii) with plaster of paris

(iii) papier mâché--newspapers.

(7) Ceramics

(i) with clay

(i a.) using molds

(i b.) without molds.

(ii) fired clay

(iii) glazed clay.

(8) Special art

(i) using pastel

(ii) using crayons

(iii) using felt markers.

(9) Other

(i) cut and paste art

(i a.) using crayons

(i b.) using pastels

(i c.) using tracers/stencils

(i d.) using markers

(i e.) using other junk/craft materials (pipe cleaners, popsicle sticks, etc.)

(ii) paper weaving

APPENDIX B

Taxonomic Diagram II

Causes of Interference Related Activities

(1) Teacher

(i) making examples

(ii) restricting the use of colors

(iii) dictating specific patterns

(iv) helping to finish children's work

(v) ways of discipline

(vi) staging exhibitions

(vii) providing photocopy work

(viii) sticking strictly to lesson plan

(ix) grouping children.

(2) Students

(i) behavioral problems

(ii) helping each other complete art works

(iii) asking teacher for help

(3) School

(i) school program

(ii) inavailability of resources

(iii) inavailability of materials

(iv) discipline policy.

(4) Parents/Guadians

(i) throwing children's art works away

(5) Visiting Instructors

(i) exhibition and grading

(ii) giving reward for the "best" art works

(iii) providing photocopy drawings.

(6) Others (Therapists and other staff members).